HOMER'S ILIAS

BY HERMAN FRIEDRICH GRIMM

1907

ENGLISH AUTOMATED TRANSLATION

ALL PARTS OF THIS BOOK ARE IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN

Homer's Iliad

By

Herman Grimm

Second Edition

(in one volume)

Stuttgart and Berlin 1907

Rudolph Grimm

born March 31, 1830

departed November 13, 1889

to my dear brother and faithful friend, I dedicate this book

in gratitude and remembrance

English Edition Preface

Herman Grimm's study of the *Iliad* represents a unique moment in 19th-century intellectual history, where the rigorous scholar meets the intuitive artist. As Rudolf Steiner observed, Grimm was a "spirited observer" who

refused to treat Homer as a relic of the past. Instead, he approached the epic with the belief that these "folk epics lead us deeper into human souls" than any historical research ever could. Grimm's method was to let the figures of Troy take effect on his own soul, treating the fates of Achilles and Agamemnon not as distant myths, but as lives that "touch us in the here and now like the fates of people living around us."

A defining feature of Grimm's analysis is his reverence for Homer's "eminent simplicity" and startling realism. Grimm argued that when Homer describes a battle or a craft, he speaks with the precision of a specialist. He famously cited Napoleon as the ultimate judge of this realism; the emperor, a man of action and strategy, recognized in Homer a fellow soldier who understood the "direct and vivid" spirit of warfare. For Grimm, this realism was the foundation upon which the higher, spiritual elements of the poem were built, creating a "metal-flux" where the smallest detail and the grandest simile belong to a single, inseparable whole.

However, Grimm also cautioned that to truly reach the Greek world, one must "leave the earthly ground and use the wings of fantasy." He drew a sharp distinction between the Roman and Greek spirits: while the Romans are understandable to the modern mind as politicians and legal scholars, the Greeks exist in a "fairytale mood." Grimm felt that in the veins of characters like Alcibiades or Achilles, there flowed a last drop of *ichor*—the blood of the gods. To Grimm, the "Creative Imagination" was not an ornament of the mind, but a real, objective power in human history. He viewed the Olympian gods not as mere metaphors, but as a "ruling house" whose deeds and passions intertwine with those of men, requiring the reader to take the Muse's invocation with absolute seriousness.

Ultimately, Grimm's *Ilias* serves as a rehabilitative work for the modern reader. By focusing on the "Wrath of Achilles" as a psychological and spiritual core, he sought to rescue the poem from being seen as a mere "artificial pedagogical discipline." He presents Achilles as a lonely figure, unable to discuss his innermost heart with his peers, forced instead to resolve his affairs with "divine spiritual beings." In doing so, Grimm invites us into a "higher circle of interest" where the boundaries between the human and the divine blur. As Steiner noted, Grimm "dreamt this dream

most beautifully," offering a vision of Homer that remains alive because it treats the spirit not as a mere idea, but as a tangible, creative reality.

This English edition has been prepared using automated translation to bring Grimm's profound insights to a wider audience. Great care has been taken to preserve the structural integrity of the original German publication; original page numbers have been retained in their approximate locations, strategically placed so as to avoid interrupting the flow of words or sentences. This layout allows the reader to reference the original pagination of the 19th-century text while engaging with Grimm's narrative in a seamless, modern format.

AUTHOR'S NOTICE

These notes stand apart from Homeric scholarship. What I write is a work of gratitude. For many years I have drawn joy from Homer's works, in which I revere the structure of a unified work of art fashioned through the arduous labor of a lifetime. We know, of course, that the sun neither sinks in the west nor rises in the east; nevertheless, the setting and rising of the great sun will always move mankind and awaken beautiful and true feelings within us. Let it be permitted to believe in a Homer whom legend allows to wander about as a blind singer, in a human soul from whose solitary creative impulse the Iliad and Odyssey gradually wound themselves forth as unities, just as Faust only fully emerged from the soul of Goethe in the course of a long lifetime.

Our literature possesses, in the records of the Poor Man of Toggenburg, the diary of a poor Swiss weaver and merchant from the eighteenth century into whose hands Shakespeare's works fell. He read and enjoyed and criticized them from his own standpoint. I could wish that, as far as the spirit from which I write is concerned, my contemplation of Homer might be placed on something of the same level.

Herman Grimm

Note on the Second Edition

The new edition is a carefully revised reprint of Herman Grimm's work, which appeared in two volumes in 1890 and 1895, taking into account also the samples previously published by him in the Deutsche Rundschau. The present consolidation into one volume, the nature of the external arrangement, as well as the price reduced by half, are intended to facilitate the widest possible distribution of the work.

Berlin-Friedenau, February 27, 1907.

Reinhold Steig

First Part. First to Ninth Books

First Book

Homer begins his poem with three scenes that form the introduction to all subsequent books. The first scene is the most powerful. He addresses the Muse:

> Goddess, sing the wrath of Achilles, the ruinous,
> Which brought infinite woe to the Achaeans,
> Hurled many sturdy souls down to Hades,
> But gave the heroes to whom they belonged
> As prey to dogs and all manner of birds:
> So Zeus willed it, since the time those two

Stepped forth in enmity against one another,
Atreus' son, the ruler of the people, and, of divine
Origin, Achilles. [1]

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[1] The renderings of the poem given here are not a translation, but only a bare excerpt of the relevant verses with the omission of what is not absolutely necessary. The traditional, sonorous adjectives have been left out and broad sentences often contracted. I have striven to be as modern as possible. The dactylic measure chosen by me is to be read freely according to the spoken word-accent. Voss's translation will be indispensable to those who wish to look at things more closely, a work of imperishable power and beauty, which is now available everywhere in extremely cheap editions.

I compare this opening to the few bars with which Beethoven sometimes introduces his tone poems. Homer strings together a number of images that announce the entire poem like heralds. Dark clouds rising over the Greeks. Dead heroic bodies cover the field. Dogs and vultures feast upon them. The mightiest man and the strongest, descended from a god, quarrel with one another. Zeus has decreed the destruction of the people. All brought forward in a single sentence structure, the final word of which is Achilles.

One should note how visibly and in mass the dogs and birds enter. The epithet all gives the creatures such an expansion, that one sees them drawing near from here and there. Air and earth and the underworld populate themselves in our imagination with the shadows of the fallen, and over this world prevails the will of Zeus that it should be so. Destruction and annihilation are breathed out by these first seven verses. And with the following, straight into the middle of the facts!

How did all this come about? we ask.

The poet begins anew, entering the events with a leap:

But which of the gods caused the two
So to fall out? The son of Zeus and Leto,

Who, being wroth with the king, brought
Deadly sickness over the peoples. For his priest
Chryses he had mistreated. Who came to the Greek
Ships to ransom his daughter,
Bearing before him the signs of far-striking Apollo
Upon a golden scepter, entreating
All Achaeans, yet the two sons of Atreus
He petitioned most of all.
    May the gods who inhabit Olympus
Grant to you and all weapon-clad Achaeans
To destroy Priam's city and return home.
But give me my daughter, my dear child!
Take what I bring in exchange and revere Apollo,
Zeus' far-striking son. Then all
Achaeans wished to honor the god's priest,
Wished to take the ransom; yet this did not please
Atreus' son Agamemnon, and he sent
The man away wickedly with harsh words.

Not again should the old man approach the ships. His daughter he intended to take with him to his own homeland: far from her fatherland she should sit there at the loom and be his bed-companion. And now begone! the speech concludes, if you wish to get home safe. And we see the old man go away intimidated and, standing at the shore of the sea, call upon the god whom he serves. He shall avenge him. All Danaans shall pay for the tears he sheds here in solitude.

And now the description of a wrathful god.

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Upon the heights of Olympus, Apollo hears the prayer. He places the bow over his shoulder and the well-closed quiver, in which the arrows rattle, and sets out toward the ships; dark he sits himself down far from them, and his arrows begin to fly. Mules and dogs he slays first. Then he turns against the people themselves, and the funeral pyres flame up on all sides.

Note the change of light. With the lonely shore of the “far-thundering sea,” Homer begins to depict the scene where things take place. In the distance, the peaks of Olympus rise above the sea. Like the night, the plague approaches with Apollo, and into the darkness the fires shine forth.

Now the third scene.

Not the two sons of Atreus, for whom the war before Troy is after all being waged, but Achilles is grieved to have to look upon this dying, which has already lasted nine days. Zeus’s consort, the “lily-armed Hera,” has softened Achilles’ heart. He, in the midst of the assembly called by him, steps toward Agamemnon and brings him to account. It seems better to him to return home, rather than to perish here from the plague. And as the king remains silent, Achilles calls upon Calchas, the seer and interpreter of dreams, to declare by what means the wrath of the gods has been aroused.

Again Agamemnon has nothing to say, and at Achilles’ bidding, Calchas rises. He is willing to speak, Calchas begins, but he demands protection from Agamemnon, whom the peoples obey. For he could easily be wroth. Here is the first remark by Homer concerning kings:

> Mightier is a king who against a lowly man
> Is wroth and, though he at first restrains his grudge,
> Secretly nourishes it in his breast, until he lets it out.

The conflict is there. Calchas confesses he considers himself sufficiently protected from Agamemnon if only Achilles stands up for him, and Achilles, by standing up for Calchas, hurls the first insult against the king:

> No one, as long as I live and upon the earth
> Rests my gaze, of all and every Greek
> Shall be permitted to touch you with heavy hand,
> Even if you named Agamemnon himself.

Calchas reveals the cause of the plague. He demands the king give up the girl. Agamemnon’s heart boils over, black gall fills him, and it shoots like lightning from his eyes.

But he masters himself. Achilles had not turned directly against him, and so Agamemnon likewise does not turn against him. He does not rise against Achilles, but against Calchas. And indeed, now with a proposal that seems to contain nothing unjust. The girl he is willing to deliver up. To be sure, he prizes her more highly than his wife Clytemnestra, whom she surpasses in beauty and artistic labor; nevertheless, he gives her back. But another gift of honor must take her place. Agamemnon concludes calmly. It is not fitting that he, as the king, alone should go empty-handed while the other Achaeans each keep their own. For, he says, you all see that my portion is being taken from me.

Remarkable is the cold-bloodedness of Agamemnon. The feeling that Achilles wants to provoke him and that he, as king, maintains his composure, grows stronger within us. As yet, Agamemnon has not let Achilles pay with a single word for the fact that the latter first mockingly called him by name, and the test he now passes is a strong one. For Achilles now comes with insulting words; he calls the king “the most avaricious of all,” and it appears almost admirable that Agamemnon still seeks to avoid the quarrel and only to preserve his honor.

How then, Achilles cries out to him, should the Achaeans provide a gift of honor for him? All the booty has already been distributed, and it would be unseemly to take back what was once settled; common property, however, does not exist. “But you deliver up the girl! Threefold and fourfold we Achaeans will compensate you, if Zeus gives the city into our hands!”

“Not so, however good you may be, godlike Achilles!” Agamemnon replies. “Neither will you bypass me nor deceive me.

Shall I sit here without a gift while you keep yours? Do you want to command me to give up the girl?” From a replacement of the gift, he continues, he does not withdraw, and if it is refused, then he will fetch it by force. Perhaps he will then take Achilles’ gift of honor himself, or that of Ajax, or that of Odysseus, and he will be wroth to whom he then approaches. Meanwhile, that could be spoken of later; now a ship should be

drawn into the sea to bring Chryseis home along with an atoning sacrifice. Ajax or Idomeneus or Odysseus should take the lead, “or perhaps you yourself,” the king turns finally to Achilles, whereas until then he had addressed the whole group more generally. “You yourself Pelides, you most terrible of men.”

Only now, where the king speaks of the return of the portion of booty fallen to Achilles, does the quarrel take an evil turn. Neither of the two can any longer turn back, neither the elder, the bearer of the highest dignity, nor the younger, whose strength surpasses that of all others and in whose veins divine blood flows. The poet has turned things so that each of them, according to his character and his position, is in the right. Up to this point, considerations had still been observed. Among powerful people, in personal intercourse, a part of one’s thoughts is always kept silent and much of the inner claims is sacrificed: until the moment comes when an accounting is held. For Achilles and Agamemnon, it came now. Now we learn how not merely that which was being quarreled over here now had lain between the two men, and the hidden comes to an eruption.

Let us survey these beginnings of the poem. We are in the middle of things and have already taken sides, but do not even know yet why the Greeks are lying before Troy. Only this is known to us: that the city is to be destroyed. Also why Menelaus and Agamemnon stand at the head of the army is still unstated. One could say that this was well known to Homer’s listeners; but we do not know, after all, how far the Trojan legend was spread before Homer and how it sounded.

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We view the Iliad without presuppositions and say: In order to grasp the quarrel of Agamemnon and Achilles, it must be known what Agamemnon’s kingship means and how far Achilles has to submit to him. Intentionally, the poet has delayed the moment to enlighten us about this; only now, in the moment where the passions unleash themselves, does he bring more vivid content into the quarrel of the princes through the prehistory of the voyage to Troy. Achilles breaks loose. Something is to be taken from him that is his! Over his shoulder he looks at Agamemnon. One shrouded in

shamelessness, one bearing only gain in his thoughts, he calls him and asks how a single one of the Achaeans could still obey him. To him, Achilles, the Trojans had done no harm; not for that reason did he lie before Ilion: only to avenge Menelaus had they all marched out with Agamemnon. To him falls the heaviest toil in battle, to Agamemnon the greatest gift is allotted, and now his own should be taken from him again. He wants to go home.

This speech, delivered with powerful breadth, wins our heart. Achilles has been enticed to march along before the city; his is the greatest toil in the battles, yet the king takes the best for himself beforehand. And the manner in which he is answered by Agamemnon completes the transformation of our sentiment. The envy of the king reveals itself. The passion, which he no longer masters, lets him do the most foolish thing: to make the reproach of cowardice against Achilles, as if he were seeking a pretext to leave the common cause in the lurch. But he may just flee. No one would hold him. There had always been strife with him. His strength was not his merit, but a gift of the gods. Indifferent to him was his wrath. Chryseis he would send home, but take Briseis away from Achilles' own tent in return. Achilles should learn how much higher Agamemnon stands, so as not to be defied.

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Now Achilles flames up so terribly that the gods step in between. Already he has half-drawn the sword when one of the Olympian goddesses, revealing herself to his sight, seizes him by his brown, flowing hair.

Let us note here: the manly caution with which Agamemnon, until then, does not want to see, as it were, Achilles' provocative manner and presses down his wrath, had been his merit alone. No goddess had spoken soothingly to him. By the poet, the inner struggle of the king is not even mentioned, but only from his way of speaking and acting does it emerge what fills him. Through the intervention of the goddess, on the other hand, when Achilles can no longer moderate himself, the latter appears now as the higher-standing nature, akin to the gods. This fairytale-like element of direct intercourse with the gods plays around Achilles from the beginning. What he does becomes thereby a consequence of divine dispensation, by which we see him now driven forward, now again restrained. Until the end

of the poem, this cast of mind of Agamemnon as well as of Achilles is maintained and is the cause of their actions and their fates. Agamemnon left to himself, Achilles under the influence of divine participation. But always there lies a progress, a further development in what they do and why they do it. Step by step, however, the poet reveals these motives only gradually. Homer's way is to make us acquainted with the characters from small beginnings, so that what is later revealed sets what was done before in a clearer light. We shall observe how seemingly incidental and hidden the characteristics are at times of what the poet would have us know, and how what later books contain refers to the content of the earlier ones, which it carries forward, expands, or completes.

In secret dialogue, therefore, Achilles is appeased by Athena. In words he might vent his rage, but let the weapon rest. Achilles himself now seeks to calm himself. As much as his heart overflows in wrath, Athena's command he would follow. "For whoever offers obedience to the gods, him they also hear," he says. He thrusts the sword back into the scabbard. The poet achieves through this secret dialogue of the youth with the superterrestrial powers that his speech, which now begins with terrible invectives, falls less heavily upon him. The Greeks of Homer are rich in abusive words and seldom content themselves with a single one.

Heavy drunkard, dog-eyed, deer-hearted! Achilles addresses Agamemnon, to let the reproach of cowardice and avarice and that of the worthlessness of his high position follow, and with a magnificently described symbolic action his speech ends.

For like the other princes, Achilles also carries a ruler's staff, and in the midst of his passion he himself begins to describe this staff:

> Truly, by this scepter — which never again
> Turns green, which bore no leaves and no branch,
> Since it left the trunk from which it was cut
> In the mountains — for all around the bronze
> Peeled foliage and bark from it — now carry
> It the sons of Achaia in their hand,

To whom by Zeus the wielding of the laws was entrusted —
Hear the oath!

Never again would he come to the assembly of the Greeks. Let ever so many fall under Hector's strokes: for rescue you will then look in vain; remorse will consume you for not having honored the best of the Achaeans. Therewith he throws the gold-studded scepter to the earth.

Let us note how this action is reinforced by the preceding narrative of the origin of the scepter. The art of increasing the effect of an act by the moment prolonging itself in which it is completed is peculiar to Homer.

The Atride rises now, foaming with rage. But Nestor also stands up. The man of sweet speech, of well-sounding words, from whose tongue the voice flowed more pleasant than honey, who already lived through two generations and now rules in the third, Pylos, raises his voice.

How splendidly Homer now gives the speech of an ancient man, whom everyone gladly hears and who, as befits him, begins to speak of himself. With what reverence one of eighty to ninety years fills us, who speaks with resignation but still powerfully of bygone days.

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Other men had lived then and better than they: none of those today would take up the fight with those whom he had seen fighting then, himself among them! We get to know a heroic age that preceded that of the Trojan heroism. Compared to which they all here are the younger men who have experienced nothing. Then, other battles were fought! And Nestor went through them and could tell of them! Both combatants he directs to be quiet. One sees them standing there. First Agamemnon replies. Right it was, what Nestor said, but Achilles wanted to stand above all, be mightier than all, rule over all, tell all what to do, directions which no one would obey. If the eternal gods had destined Achilles to be a champion with the lance, yet the right had not been conferred upon him to say shameful things.

With justice would one call him worthless, Achilles now breaks loose, if he humbled himself to the king. This his last word: as far as the girl is concerned, let them do what they will: they had given Briseis to him, they

might take her back. But nothing further of his own shall Agamemnon dare to touch, if life be dear to him.

The king remains silent. They break up the assembly. Each goes his way.

Two characters have been brought into incurable discord with one another. The one, the king, skilled in ruling, stubbornly insisting on his right, even if yielding at times out of calculation, here however in the feeling of having gone to the limit of yieldingness. The other, a prince with divine blood in his veins, given over to sudden emotion, passionate to the point of frenzy and wounded in his honor. Achilles takes a standpoint that is impossible toward the Greek army, but is now forged fast to it. Neither of the two can turn back. —

Now the poet opens another stage and fellow players upon it, who will exercise a higher compulsion. Those who until this point were the acting main characters step back.

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Stronger ones rise. Until then only hinted at, they stood from the beginning in the background as the overmastering element. Of the individualities of the gods we shall now learn. Homer lets them take part in the struggle of men. Not only stronger than the mortals, however, do they appear, but also in even higher degree than they, passionate and inclined to wild resolutions and deeds. Of the Greeks, for a time now, it is reported in gentler narrative as if in passing. To be sure, spoken speech is still interspersed, but forms only light eddies in the flow of the report, while the gods in the Olympian palaces lead the great talk among and against one another.

Homer is familiar with the art, where it is a matter of the entry of new elements, of first creating a clear path in the imagination of the listener. He lets the Greek existence, which until then stepped close before our eyes in dramatic power, broaden itself more toward the background like a landscape. Beside the main bearers of the action, persons and events of the second rank may enter, which enliven the picture without driving the main action forward. Chryseis is returned to her father: in two words it could have been reported; instead, the sea voyage to Chrysa now becomes an

event. We see them draw the ship from the shore into the sea. Twenty rowers Odysseus chooses and takes over the lead in execution of Agamemnon's orders. Chryses' daughter is finally on board, and the vessel steers through the sea-flood. Now another thing: atoning sacrifices of bulls and goats at the shore of the sea arranged by Agamemnon. The smoke billows up to heaven. And a third thing finally: Briseis is to be led away from Achilles' tent. Two heralds, both named by name, the king sends off. With simple words they are to demand the girl. Should Achilles not give up Briseis willingly, then Agamemnon would come himself with many! Unwillingly obeying the king, the heralds go along the beach until they reach Achilles' ships. They stand before him and perceive with terror that their sight agitates him. They do not dare to speak.

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But as if with half a voice, as if he felt the shameful nature of their situation, we hear further how Achilles calms the heralds in condescending friendliness. They did not bear the guilt. The king, indeed, it was who sent them. Patroclus he instructs to fetch Briseis. For a moment it then overcomes him after all. Broken sentences about the folly of the king, before whose eyes stands neither past nor future, he thrusts forth. Now Briseis appears with Patroclus, and Achilles delivers her up. They go away with her. All this reported epically, although dramatically enough.

Now the scene that offers the transition to Olympus, as Achilles, sitting lonely and separated from his companions at the shore of the sea, looking weeping into the pathless expanse of the salt-flood, calls hither his mother with uplifted hands. Who would be able to translate this passage? To the Greeks a wealth of tender words is at command when they speak of the sea, which was their actual home. We suspect the differences more than that we exactly understand them, but we believe we feel them. Most fairytale-like now, how Thetis, sitting in the depths of the ocean, perceives the call of her son and dives upward: the Greek views are so familiar to us that we believe we experience it with them, as children today experience what our own fairytales contain. Close beside her son she sits and strokes him with her hand. What ailed him? Nothing should he conceal from her.

She knew everything, says Achilles. To what end still tell it? Nevertheless he begins. In sixty softly rolling-on verses it is once more set forth by Homer what had happened. Zeus is to be precisely informed by Thetis, and as if for this purpose, Achilles lets the events pass anew before our eyes. We hear what has just been heard, but follow it gladly once more, step by step, to become clear to ourselves how much wrong has been done to Achilles.

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Let us note the strange knowledge that Thetis, down in the depths of the ocean, has of everything that had happened, while to Zeus himself the events remain unknown until they shall be told to him. Homer only wished to say: a look of the mother upon Achilles must reveal to her what had occurred. But perhaps the poet also sought a motive to gain a better introduction for Achilles' narrative, and feigned the omniscience of the divine mother in all things concerning her son, whose final fate was indeed known to her in advance. Let us also note how gently Achilles presents the course of the quarrel, and how the poet, into the entreaty with which the son wishes to move the mother to implore Zeus for revenge for him, allows the narrative of things to flow in that enlighten us about Thetis' relationship to Zeus. Admirable is Homer's art of occasionally scattering factual matter in just such a way. Thetis had already told Achilles as a child how Hera, Poseidon, and Athena laid Zeus Kronion in fetters and Thetis, hastening out to Olympus, freed him; how she called the hundred-armed Briareus, who sat down beside Zeus and whom the gods feared. Now, however, Achilles demands of his mother that she should implore Zeus to grant assistance to the Trojans against the Achaeans in order to avenge him.

Thetis promises it to him. She strengthens the son in his resolutions all the more as his life was indeed to be so short. Here for the first time Achilles' fate is mentioned: the early end to which he was unalterably consecrated. For not the fall of Troy, but that of Achilles is the content of the Iliad. Yet quite incidentally again the poet lets this flow in here, so that the listener is prompted to the question of what Homer actually means to say here. For the words with which he indicates Achilles' early death have not been applied by him until now. *Aisa* is the name of the goddess of fate:

the *aisa* allotted to Achilles, says the poet, is small, he will die while yet a child. This is to say, Achilles was predestined to perish in youth. Only afterward do we learn how Achilles had grown up with this thought and how his outlook on life was borne by this foresight. An important circumstance again for the judgment of his actions.

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Thetis promises everything. Only it could not happen immediately. For Zeus was, far away from snow-covered Olympus, with the Ethiopians, where he tarried with all the heavenly ones for a meal. Only on the twelfth day would he return. Then she would hasten up to his house. With this consolation the goddess leaves her son. Achilles sits there alone again. Thinking of the fair-girdled woman whom they robbed from him.

Now let us take note. In the case of Chryseis, Homer provides not a word of description. That she is called fair-cheeked is almost meaningless, for many girls and women in the poet's work have a claim to this epithet. Agamemnon places Chryseis above Clytemnestra, but starting only from the viewpoint of utility; he debases her and his own spouse with this comparison to pieces of living household furniture. Briseis too, when she is led out by Patroclus and handed over to the heralds, is the fair-cheeked one and nothing more. Nevertheless, Homer added something here with a single word that draws our attention: Briseis went unwillingly with the heralds, he says. That could, to be sure, be taken only externally to mean that Briseis went hesitantly, like a young animal around whose neck a rope is placed and which offers an undefined resistance because it scents trouble. And when Homer repeats the word now, and indeed this time regarding Achilles, that he gave up the girl unwillingly, we would not need to interpret that as a preference that Achilles perhaps cherished for Briseis either.

Nevertheless, it is natural that this double "unwillingly" of the going as well as of the giving-up strikes us. Involuntarily we look for a feeling binding Achilles and Briseis, and now we wish, hurrying ahead of the events into the later books of the Iliad, to admire the art with which the poet lets the figure of Briseis reveal herself gradually and almost imperceptibly.

Already in the second book her name returns, when Homer describes the camp of the Myrmidons. Briseis is named again as the one for whose sake Achilles is wroth. This time as the fair-locked one, which means not much more or less than fair-cheeked. At the same time, however, it is told how it came to pass that Achilles received her as a gift of honor.

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He had captured her as booty when Lyrnessos and the walls of Thebe were destroyed and he slew Mynes and Epistrophus, the spear-throwing sons of Euenus. Wroth for Briseis' sake, it says in the second book, Achilles lay there and sighed. Even here it is still doubtful whether the mourning applies also to her person.

Homer has saved another opportunity to let it become manifest why Briseis went unwillingly and Achilles saw her depart unwillingly. In the nineteenth book we hear it, when she was brought back to him in the tent. Everything had occurred that Achilles foresaw. Happy now Agamemnon that Achilles wishes to fight again in the ranks of the Greeks. Happy Achilles that he may avenge the fallen Patroclus. Of the return of Briseis there is now talk. "Would," Achilles cries, "that the arrow of Artemis had killed her, that day when I took her for myself from the booty of Lyrnessos."

When Agamemnon delivers her over to Odysseus so that he may lead her back, the latter demands an oath from the king that Briseis is untouched. The king swears it solemnly. The first thing that strikes Briseis' eyes as she enters Achilles' tent again is the mangled Patroclus lying there.

Now the poet says more of her beauty. "Similar to golden Aphrodite" he calls her. She cries out shrilly, throws herself over the corpse and enfolds it, and then, tearing her breast and her countenance with her hands, she breaks into laments, "the woman similar to the goddesses." She calls Patroclus by name. How he had been so kind to her in misery and wretchedness! "Living I left you when I went forth from the tent, and now I come back and find you dead! How evil always follows for me from evil! My husband, to whom father and mother once gave me, I saw sink in battle before the city, with him three of my own brothers on the same day of misfortune. Then

you did not want me to weep, then you told me how I would travel by ship to Phthia as the youthful wife of divine Achilles, to the wedding among the Myrmidons; therefore I wish to bewail you, the one who spoke kindly, forever." And then at the conclusion the magnificent verses as Voss translates them:

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Thus she spoke in tears, and all around the women sighed,
For Patroclus in appearance, yet each for her own misery.

Now we admire the intensification. Now, so late, do we first learn of the secret thoughts of Briseis as she unwillingly left Achilles. Also why the latter then sent Patroclus to hand her over to the heralds, we know now. In the *δῶκε δ' ἄγειν* a deeper meaning now seems to lie; in the brevity of the three words an indication of a concealed feeling. The poet knows what means must be applied to bring even persons who only walk alongside to the foreground in their place. Only one single time more does Homer mention her: in that last wonderful night in which Priam is received by Achilles and where he enjoys sleep for the first time again after the death of his son, there rests beside Achilles, over whom also for the first time human rest came again, the fair-cheeked Briseis. Upon the course of events Briseis' personality had no influence, yet beside Achilles and Patroclus she grows at last into the possession of an inner life. —

Twelve days, then, it was to have lasted until Zeus returned from the Ethiopians, and for so long Achilles must wait for the granting of his request. We see Homer apply a sensory means to evoke in the listener the feeling of the length of this term. He turns back to the description of the sea voyage that Odysseus has to accomplish with Chryseis. The tone of the narrative becomes different. We believe ourselves transported into the Odyssey, which is as if filled by the noise of the ships and the creaking of the oars and the pull of the wind rushing through the waves. The Odyssey is a mariner's tale in which there is talk of eternal departure and return, while the Iliad had the greater charm for those who were involved in wars and in the struggle of opinions. With comfort the poet reports the voyage to Chrysa as if he had been there and were concerned that nothing be left out.

How they arrive, how Chryses receives his child again, and then, thoroughly satisfied and appeased, prays earnestly to Apollo that the latter put a stop to the plague. The preparation of the atoning sacrifice is told circumstantially, the sacrifice itself and the meal, the banquet, the song in praise of the god, finally how the Greeks lay themselves down to sleep by the ropes holding the ship upon the shore. At length Homer reports further how they first prepare for the voyage the next day, how the voyage is accomplished, and how after the return they draw the ship onto land again and secure it with timbers. So completely does the poet transport us into these things as if the voyage of this ship were now the actual center of his work. It is also beautiful how he now leads us back to Achilles. All the while, as things in Chrysa played themselves out so restfully and peacefully, the latter has sat high on the gravelly sand of the sea and awaited the attack of the Trojans to which the Achaeans were to succumb, and so the twelfth dawn has finally risen, and Zeus returns with the gods to Olympus, and Thetis appears before him.

Zeus is now described by Homer. “Many-peaked” is Olympus: apart from the others, Thetis finds Zeus sitting on the highest summit of the mountain. Close before him she sits down, with her left hand clasping his knees, with her right touching his chin. Father, she addresses him. And then only a few verses: for so long may Zeus give victory to the Trojans until the Achaeans have made good their wrong toward Achilles. Kronion sits there and is silent. Thetis clings more firmly to him and demands a grant or the opposite, so that she might know which of the goddesses he prizes the least.

The poet uses a magnificent means to indicate Zeus’s thoughts. For the first time he calls him here the cloud-gatherer. One feels how at the prayers of Thetis clouds gather around him. Voss felt that well and in his manner applied still an intensification, for when Zeus allows himself to be forced to an answer by Thetis, Homer calls him again *νεφεληγερέτα*. Voss translates the word the first time, as I cited, as cloud-gatherer, the second time however he says:

Full of resentment now the ruler in the thunder-clouds, Zeus, began

as if the collision of the last two words were to prepare us, as it were, for an outbreak of divine displeasure. And now follows Zeus's answer, the famous passage to which Phidias is said to have owed his imaginative image of the Olympian Zeus and which gives us to recognize the power of the father of gods and men in its fullness; which at the same time, however, and this is the characteristic feature of the poem, lets Zeus appear in the midst of the other gods as caught in uninterrupted toil to maintain himself, one might almost say, parliamentarily in his position and to procure validity for his supreme will. For the nature of the Homeric Zeus, the solution lies in these words.

> Heavily pressed the cloud-gatherer began:
> Evil stories! How you there set me
> In enmity against my wife again, so that she begins to bicker,
> Who indeed already enough with contrary words
> Attacks me among the gods: she asserts
> That I helped the Trojans. Be off with you!
> So that she notices nothing! Leave it to me to turn everything!
> Well, I nod to you, that you may cherish trust,
> What counts as the highest to the immortal gods,
> As an infallible sign that it comes from me!
> For nothing do I take back, nothing deceptive do I say,
> Nothing remains without completion, what my head's
> Nodding promises. And with dark eyebrows
> Kronion nodded, and the ambrosial hair
> Streamed over the ruler's immortal brow
> Forward, and Olympus began to tremble.

How uncommonly vivid! One believes one sees Thetis hesitating in disbelief, whereupon Zeus then lets the symbolic confirmation of his word follow. Now Thetis is reassured, and they part. She, flying down from the splendor-shrouded Olympus with a leap into the depth of the sea, Zeus going into his house. All the gods rise to meet their father. No one dares to remain sitting, but they go toward him. Zeus sits down. Hera, however, has seen all well and immediately she begins to bicker.

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Let us take good note at what opportunity Homer lets this outbreak of highest sublime effect take place in Zeus. Zeus gives a nymph the advice to leave him secretly so that his wife might not learn that he had spoken with her. He is afraid of Hera's bickering. He hesitates. He is in embarrassment. And in the midst of these so highly human states, a slight movement of the divine head brings the mountains to trembling! The coincidence of common circumstances and immense divine power gives the latter a confirmation. Wavering, yes, almost weakness, and superterrestrial power and majesty dwell close together.

By Hera, then, Zeus is ill-received. She has noticed that he was negotiating secretly with someone, but, so it seems, not with whom. She wants to know. Zeus strictly forbids such inquiries. Hera proceeds further: she has recognized the silver-footed Thetis after all, how she sat with him in the twilight of the breaking day, clasped his knees and probably asked for Achilles. Zeus does not engage in anything, but dismisses his wife to rest. He threatens. Hera is startled and forces herself to be silent. Silence in the hall all around. As Nestor below between Agamemnon and Achilles, so Hephaestus this time above must establish peace, and he succeeds in creating a pleasant temperature. He exhorts his mother not to disturb the banquet further, reminds her how terribly Zeus is superior to them and how it once went for him himself when, seized by the heel, he was hurled down until he, after he had flown downward a full day, finally fell down upon Lemnos and was kindly received by the Sintians. To be sure, we read in one of the later books that the mother Hera herself secretly threw Hephaestus down so that he fell into the sea, where Thetis rescued him, but these variants are delightful and show that fairytales may be told now this way, now that. Homer's poem is full of such apparent contradictions, and so it should be.

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For even while Hephaestus needs a whole day to reach the earth, Thetis flitted in a moment up to Olympus and down to the sea again; and while Athena holds Achilles back by the hair, shortly thereafter she already tarries

in the far distance with Zeus among the Ethiopians; and as far as the actual measure of the divine bodies is concerned, it wavers incessantly between immeasurable size and simply human proportion. And so we see the gods here now sitting together like humans and like our own kind getting along or bickering. Hephaestus' intervention is successful. Smiling gently, Hera allows herself to be appeased, smiling she takes the cup from Hephaestus' hands, for all the others he ladles from the inexhaustible bowl, and immeasurable laughter rang out for the blessed gods when they saw him so eagerly performing his office. Throughout the whole day, until the sinking sun, they feast and drink. Apollo's lyre-playing delights them and the song of the Muses. Then, when it has become evening, they return home, each to his palace, and Zeus and Hera slumber peacefully beside one another.

How fine are the means with which the poet here depicts an existence that lay outside all experience. Goethe rightly calls the gods of Homer a reflex of the Greek heroes. But thus they only appear where they fight and deliberate. In their family life they have an existence for themselves. Homer's task here was to invent something that worked completely differently from the behavior of mortals and yet had to be believable, as if it resembled it entirely. How does he proceed? He reaches down into the depths of common human intercourse. Never has the art of working with contrast been more genially applied. While Homer in one place lends his gods fairytale-like grand stature, lets them appear human in superhuman height of spatial size and physical strength, in another he gives to their thoughts, their language, and their intercourse so little superhuman measure that in this direction he places them below the princes and heroes in whose fate they intervene. Let one note the conduct, always maintained despite all passion, of the Greeks and Trojans, among whom reason and propriety always gain the upper hand again, and the feeling of having to preserve one's dignity remains decisive.

Nothing of this restraint among the gods. We see them, unconcerned as if in frivolous lightheartedness, play their game with the fates of men. A comparison has always forced itself upon me: let us read of the calm, morally maintained conduct of the middle class in the 18th century, which

in France, England, and Germany shows the same symptoms of conscientious management of existence, and let us compare with it the reckless management of the nobility of that time, who maintained themselves above the citizens and in fact were regarded almost as a higher-standing race, and we have the difference of which Homer avails himself to represent his gods as a more powerful society above the mortals. To these alone fell the task of letting life become hard for them on earth in conscientious labor.

Let us take the relationship, for instance, as Schiller shows it in Love and Intrigue. The Homeric Olympus corresponds in strange similarity to the small court depicted here. Among themselves the prince and the court nobility, who stand at the height of existence, are considerate; to be sure they intrigue, practice various infidelities, each knows of the other that nothing is to be held of them, are held together and tamed by fear and advantage, but always, however much they may know and despise one another, as soon as their gazes turn into the depths, they sit close together again and regard the lower station as the plaything of their whims and as bound to unconditional subordination and reverence.

Toward these commoners there is no code of morals binding for them. Ill humor allows everything, good humor commits to nothing. They look upon man in his agony without feeling, as the physician looks upon the rabbit serving for an experiment, but at the same time they demand reverent subordination and firm trust in their high goodness and justice. In their own intercourse often petty and undignified, they become, as soon as a being of a lower order appears, majestic and unapproachable.

Let us let this comparison serve as a measure, and the Homeric management of the gods is explained perhaps from the poet’s own experiences, somewhat as in Goethe’s Reynard the Fox the lion with his own kind was explained from those of Goethe. What is not a beast of prey does not count, and Reynard stands, however complete a rogue he may be, high above the lowly-born domestic animal and the innocent hare whom he holds by the throat. Homer descends, when he describes the intimate

intercourse of the gods, to a considerable depth. As rabble he sometimes lets them appear, who insult one another and treat each other with slaps. How high Hector with his family stands morally above the gods, who hunt him to death with lies and deceit! Just as high as the poor musician of Schiller above the Lord Marshal. But precisely by the poet placing the gods so low on the one side, he may on the other, where they appear as rulers of the universe, clothe them with such immense majesty. Let us assume Homer had in fact the representation of experienced conditions in mind in the characterization of the Olympian bustle: with what delicacy does he avoid even the appearance that a malicious criticism of these things had enticed him to such fantasies. On the contrary, just as the average citizen of the 18th century regarded with sadness, yet at the same time not without admiration, the bustle of the higher-born class for whom he wished nothing ruinous and whose arrogance he accepted, so too we see Homer's secret criticism brought into harmony with full subordination. He believed in the divinity of the Olympian caste, for whom intercourse with the commoners was only a sport. He revered them and looked up to them shyly. What a contrast between the Zeus whom Thetis followed all the way to the lonely little spot on the summit of Olympus, where he sought rest as a plagued head of a family in his domestic distress, sufficiently annoyed by Hera and the malevolent, refractory rest of the company of gods who, if they had not always felt his fist heavy upon their necks, would have rebelled once more: — what a contrast between this supreme father of gods and the thunderer ruling over the universe, whose mere nodding shakes Olympus.

Who is capable of everything. Upon whose easily shifting whim the fate of nations and kings in the depth depends. How would ordinary mortals have been permitted to have the famous "two souls" of Louis XIV dwelling in their breasts? How serious was the discord between Agamemnon and Achilles: the fate of the Greeks rests in the fact that both value and allow each other to prevail, and only the extreme offenses press their inner feeling to an eruption. When Nestor rises, only the mildness of this ancient, benevolent old man seems capable of extinguishing the fire. How respectable the men, all three, stand before us. And now the gods, whom the

silly Hephaestus quickly brings to other thoughts. In the laughter which his hurried limping back and forth excites, they feel themselves appeased, as if nothing had occurred. All of them are in the twinkling of an eye of the same mind again; they laugh and drink and sleep, though Ilion or the Greek camp go up in flames.

This childish governance of the Olympians lends Homer's poetry its sunny serenity. We do not mock his gods, but rather enjoy their adventures. How Homer's poem related to the belief in gods and the veneration of the gods troubles our heads today as little as, at the beginning of Goethe's Faust, the cozy intercourse of God the Father with the devil Mephistopheles. Homer's poem likely contained no collection of legends for the ecclesiastical use of the pious minds of his time, but rather exhilarating things that for nearly three thousand years now have delighted the nations and will long continue to delight them, and did no injury to the reverent belief in higher powers. In the Iliad, the colorful, remorseless, immortal management of the gods softens what occurs below of a murky, remorseful, and death-bringing nature. These fairytales of the gods never let us lose the feeling of dealing after all only with the work of a poet who seeks to lift himself above the gravity of earthly fates. Over Achilles, sitting at the shore of the sea, prevails a host of immortals in inextinguishable cheerfulness, almighty beings with unlimited capacity for enjoyment, who, in contrast to their never-ending blessed existence, let our tearful struggles of thought appear as unnecessary exertion.

The works of all great poets exhort us to composure and resignation, and we see Homer thinking as they do. How could a poet who played such a game with the inhabitants of Olympus have believed in the real power of these shadow-forms filled with sun-glitter, which he created and lets act according to his will? The gods to whom Homer prayed were of a different kind. The culture has perished that once lifted Homer to the height from which his imagination prevailed so freely and joyfully. It is the deep-seated difference that separates the Iliad from the Nibelungen, that our heroic poem lacks the friendly heaven, that uninhabited, murky clouds hang down

over the heroes and their wives almost to the crown of their heads, and mist and wintry solitude fill the air they breathe.

And now let us also express this: that the later centuries of Greek existence did not again so entirely comprehend or feel these gods as those first times, so as to represent them in their plastic art thoroughly in the spirit of the ancient Homer. The sculpture of the Greek flowering-period does not let the gods appear as mobile as they go about in Homer. They lack in their flawless formation the grotesque element, and where Aristophanes seeks to lend it to them, caricatures come out. To my feeling, Raphael was the first again who, because he grasped antiquity in an innocently playing sense, even without knowing Homer's poem, let the bustle of the Homeric gods arise again upon the ceiling of the Farnesina in that unconstrained sunny serenity in which Homer wished to conjure it into the imagination of those to whom he himself once sang his songs. —

I compared the seven introductory verses of this first book with those first bars of Beethoven's tone poems: we read how Beethoven once sent such first bars quite at the last, when the manuscript of a work had already departed for printing.

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I would not hold it for impossible that Homer, after he finished the first canto of the Iliad, only then added the first verses as its introduction. As if he felt that to the quiet serenity of the divine existence concluding the book, this reminder of impending disaster must form the introduction. The poem was to begin as if with the sounds of a funeral march booming up toward a cloud-heavy sky. Let one follow in the course of this first book the contrasts of day and night. In what conscious sequence the poet lets them follow upon one another. Again, and again the morning breaks and the night sets in; we measure the progress of what is happening. Piece by piece also the landscape expands before our eyes: the beach of the sea, the sea itself, the distant Olympus, finally the peaks of Olympus with the divine fortresses, from the early morning mist into the deep night. And we shall see with what art he, in the course of the Iliad, lets this sight of the land become broader and broader, until we know the entire territory whose back bore the fates of

the Greeks and Trojans, into the ravines of the mountains, and the sky above it and the passing clouds. Thus also in the Odyssey. Compare Virgil by contrast. How little we learn there. In Hermann and Dorothea, Goethe knows how to instill in us a similar feeling of being at home on the spot.

If in Beethoven's musical pieces the art astonishes us with which he works through contrasts, we admire no less in him the power of invention with which he finds the transitions from one mood to another. Beethoven first, to my knowledge, reflects the infinite change of feelings in his works which masters our breast, but which, even where we stand under the mastery of strong emotions, compels us to interrupt them. The deepest mourning of man is indeed touched by this necessity: the need to observe pauses in which other streams of thought penetrate into it is stronger than our spiritual power. Many sonatas of Beethoven, if one wished to interpret them, seem to represent the churning confusion of such emotions.

Homer already recognized that and exploited it for his poem. In the last book, Achilles expresses this so beautifully when he compels Priam to partake of food. One might indeed be tempted, given the frequent jumping about of his narrative, to think of the accidental clashing together of fragments of a collection lost in many parts, or one blown together from many sides, but we give up such conjectures when we take into consideration this higher organism of composition. I recall the quite modern Dickens, whose novels sometimes have the appearance as if they were only externally connected fragments of reports on human fates whose other parts were lost and which an editor fitted into one another into a seeming unity. Homer's art in this direction is inexhaustible. He works like a modern. Not only does he let light and shadow alternate, but he also changes the tempo of a representation. From dramatic diction he passes over into epic. The storm he calms suddenly; the rest he interrupts with unexpected movement. We see here already in what bursts he reveals the character of Achilles in this first book. The first thing he says of him is that he was grieved for the Greeks. He, not Agamemnon, is the one who therefore calls the assembly. Then the immoderate violence toward the king, then the mildness when he gives Briseis away, and finally the tears of a child with which he calls hither

his mother. And then the cry for revenge: all Achaeans shall pay for what the king alone after all inflicted upon him! And at last then again the dull brooding at the shore of the sea. I pointed it out: how beautiful, after the sea voyage to Chrysa and back has been told in idyllic accents, the transition is again to Achilles, who sat the whole time and awaited the beginning of the revenge. We are as if saturated by the feeling that only a few years more are granted to him, and what the Iliad contains in the following books is the story of this child of the gods, how he develops out of innate wildness to the final height of mature thoughts and of feeling with which the poem concludes.

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We shall see how Homer never loses sight of this conclusion of the Iliad, and how every book brings us some steps closer to it. And while Homer lets him whose figure is the bearer of the whole grow up spiritually before us in this way, he lets a wealth of other figures find the same development around him, so that each rises to a certain rounding-out of character. Only the blessed gods do not. Who, eternally young and immortal, at the end of the immense experiences play on just as unconstrainedly with the fates of men as they did on the first day. And who provide the golden background to the murky tangle of fate of the mortals.

Second Book

On Olympus, as in the camp of the Greeks, they sleep. Only Zeus is unable to find rest. While Hera at his side — it would not be un-Homeric to say — snores, the obligation undertaken turns around in his head. If it is to go badly for the Greeks, then there must be fighting with the Trojans. The plague, the discord of the princes, and Achilles' resolution have, however, so brought down the Greeks that to move them to a sudden attack against the city, which for nine years has stood victorious, seems almost impossible. Agamemnon must be encouraged. Zeus summons, as Homer says, an "evil dream," commands it to step in the form of Nestor to the king's couch and to communicate to him that, if the Greeks attacked today,

Troy would soon be in their hands. The evil dream carries out the command, and Agamemnon, awaking and convinced of the truth of the promise, commands heralds to call the peoples together for consultation.

Previously, however, he unites the princes at Nestor's ships. "Hear, friends," he begins, "in a dream Nestor appeared to me and spoke thus: — You sleep, son of Atreus?

Whoever has the deciding word to say should not sleep the whole night. I am a messenger of Zeus. He is concerned on your account! Bid the Achaeans arm themselves, for Ilion will now fall to you. The gods have decreed it, Hera has turned their mind. Take this well to heart. Thus he spoke and escaped. Now then up, to see if we can move the Achaeans to the fight! I shall first seek to persuade them, as is right and fair, to take flight with the ships; you, however, hold them back, each in his place."

After this speech the surprising thing happens that no one takes the word to express himself against it. Only Nestor says: "Friends. If this dream had been told by another, we would hold it for a deception; now however the first of all Achaeans has seen it: up, let us provoke the Achaeans to the fight."

So speaking he leaves the princes, and all rise to carry out what Agamemnon had commanded. And afterward then the general assembly of the Greeks is opened and described with its vicissitudes in the life-filled breadth such as only Homer is able to tell.

How are we to understand this preliminary consultation of the princes? Agamemnon announces a strange resolution, and they accept it as the natural thing. Given the mood of the army, the king's procedure must, from our point of view, have appeared questionable. Why did none of the princes speak against it, where their opinion was requested? What Nestor said could not remove the apprehensions that must necessarily have arisen for them.

And why does the poet not prepare us for this turn of things? Homer has certain peculiarities whose intervention we may expect because a large part of the effect of his poems rests upon them: to these belongs the fact that he

never surprises us. Never do we stand there and say: we do not understand that. Homer carefully prepares what is to happen, and here he omits it in a flagrant manner.

It is easy to calculate which princes took part in the preliminary assembly. Beside Nestor in the first place Menelaus, then Idomeneus, the two Ajax, Diomedes.

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That Odysseus also was not missing, Homer's listeners knew very well: Odysseus had been named in the first book already as one of the most significant generals of the army. To be sure, he had until then done nothing yet that lets him step forth as the clever, cautious man as which he soon reveals himself, but the epithet *πολύμητις* had already been conferred upon him by the poet. How did it happen that precisely Odysseus accepted the dream as favorable without contradiction? Mistrust toward messages of the gods belonged to the natural qualities of the Homeric man. Caution regarding divine commands was generally familiar to antiquity. I recall the hesitation with which Gideon (in the Book of Judges) manifoldly tests the command of God to attack the Midianites, whether it be in fact a command of God. Odysseus' question must have been whether the message received by Agamemnon had not been an intended seduction. We know how unbelievingly Odysseus behaves when, upon the return home to Ithaca in the moment of mortal danger, Leucothea appears to him with the veil which, if he would throw himself into the flood with it, would save him. Odysseus is shy of giving belief to the goddess. In full detail, however, Homer later presents Odysseus' view when he lets him, unrecognized, philosophize with Penelope about the nature of dreams, which he divides into truthful and deceptive ones.

Let us accept Agamemnon's unreserved belief as a contribution to the characterization of the king. It lay outside his manner to suspect that Zeus had wished to deceive him. Agamemnon's nature is carried through by Homer almost the most finely. A vivid and convincing mixture of high and, I say not low, but egoistic qualities we find brought together as constituents of his complicated being into a unity. Again and again, we are reminded by

fine traits that greatness and pettiness combine in him. We understand him particularly well also because, as I said, no Olympian interests himself personally for Agamemnon. The king acts always out of himself alone.

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One of his traits is haughty straightforwardness. He insists on his advantage, but deceives no one. He cherishes trust in his right and his position. It does not occur to him to doubt Zeus' message. Why should one sovereign not assist the other in a family matter? How then however, we ask after all, would Agamemnon with this disposition come to wish to deceive the people? And indeed, as if that were understood of itself? And to what end? Had Agamemnon done that out of himself alone, as according to Homer's words must after all be assumed, the poet would certainly have told us of the thought-work of the king that led him to this resolution. Detailed and beautiful and believable is after all described how Agamemnon, after the dream has left him, tosses back and forth between half-awake thoughts. Goethe has pointed out with what art the poet, by letting Agamemnon surround himself piece by piece with raiment, brings the external appearance of the king thereby more vividly before our eyes. And now he stands there among the most distinguished of the Greek people, to whom he communicates the dream in a confidential manner. There could only one thing inspire him: confidence in the resolutions of the army! To what end there shifts and arts? According to Agamemnon's thoughts, the Greeks had to have the same trust in Zeus' message that filled him.

And later then, when, as we shall see, the king's plan fails because the Greeks, as soon as they hear of return home, storm to the ships without letting the princes come to word: why is not Agamemnon, but Odysseus afterward the one who is consumed by indignation over this turn of things?

To that I now give this answer: only for this reason can Odysseus stand there so desperately after the unfavorable course of the popular assembly, because he must have been the one upon whose authority Agamemnon told the dream to the people differently than he had received it, so that the great failure fell to the charge of Odysseus, who put the deceptive speech into the king's mouth. Therefore, it is in the sequel then also Odysseus who brings

things back into the right track! I believe that the passage of our book where these things had been more broadly told is lost, and I attempt to reconstruct it.

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We stand at the beginning of the second book, then, where Agamemnon has called the princes for preliminary consultation and tells them the dream. I translate, in order to bring my supplement more into connection with the rest, first Homer's verses with the address of the king to the princes:

> Hear me, friends! In sleep Nestor appeared to me,
> Who at my head stood; you sleep, o king?
> He addressed me: he must, who great resolutions
> Has before him, not sleep through the whole night!
> Now wake up: I am a messenger of Kronion!
> Let the Achaeans take to the weapons!
> Now Ilion is given into your hands!
> Hera's prayers have moved the gods:
> Troy sinks: then I awoke — up then, see to it,
> That the Achaeans prepare themselves for the fight! —
> Thus he spoke and sat down, but Nestor
> Took well-thinking the word, to speak thus:
> Friends, princes, leaders of the people, if us
> Not Agamemnon himself told the dream:
> To any other we would not believe it
> And, leaving him, turn ourselves to the home.
> Yet since the king says it: Up then! the Achaeans
> In this way or that perhaps to the fight to drive!

Thus far Homer, in whose poem I here let the gap begin which I, following my play of imagination, now seek to fill out:

Odysseus seizes the word. How Agamemnon and Nestor could think, he asks, that the Greeks would fight. Depressed by the plague and the wrath of Achilles, they would neither wish to attack the city, nor, if they attempted it, keep the upper hand. The message of Zeus was a deceptive one. And now

Odysseus would bring forward something like what he, according to the Odyssey, many years later explains to Penelope:

> We know after all that the palace of dreams
> Has a double exit and that only those
> Bring truth who go out from the gate

> Which is of ivory; yet from the other,
> Of horn, come the deceptive dreams.
> Do you know from which door yours came down?
> What if from the horn-one now and tonight
> The fire of our ships reddens the clouds?
> And as all the princes of the Achaeans
> Sat in silence, spoke Agamemnon: Speak,
> How the will of the Kronide is to be scouted.
> For it seems to me that no one knows the means,
> And I myself least of all. But Odysseus:
> When the Achaeans have assembled,
> Speak then that Zeus has sent you a dream
> Which exhorts us to return home.
> And the princes should, when you have spoken,
> Against you then lift their voice
> And demand the beginning of the fight from you.
> To many then the home will appear sweet,
> To several however the shame be sensitive,
> To return home without glory. If the Achaeans
> Then desire to fight, let it be a sign
> That the will of the Kronide to us the Trojans'
> City into the hands gives. Yet if the people
> On into the home demand, so was the dream
> Deceptive which you saw. And Agamemnon:
> Well then, so will I try the people.
> Away into the home, will I say to them,
> Zeus sends us, and when I have spoken, you shall
> Against me speak: if the Greeks then wish

Away with the ships: be it a sign that
The Kronide deceived me. If they demand however
Then into the fight, so was what I heard
Zeus' infallible will. [1]

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[1] I repeat, in order to make every misunderstanding impossible, that my attempt to fill out the gap present here only according to my feeling is nothing but a play of imagination.

Here now Homer enters again:

Thus speaking he went away, and all
Scepter-bearing princes stood up
To obey the shepherd of the peoples,
Yet the peoples came from all sides,
Like the humming bees, crowded close,
From the hollowed rock swarm upon swarm
Pouring themselves over the flowers of spring.

With this, the poet introduces the assembly of the entire army, the course of which he portrays so magnificently. From this point onward everything is clear once more. One of the reasons why the Iliad and Odyssey have passed so victoriously through the centuries, and why they have been adopted by all peoples as if they formed a part of their own literature, lies in the circumstance that the universal human reason inherent in the actions and speeches of all persons acting therein never denies itself. To understand these things, we never need to say to ourselves: those were Greeks who acted thus out of national sentiment, or that happened in a far distant time of different thought; rather, we ourselves today would feel and act as the men of Homer did. Precisely for this reason it must be conspicuous when passages of the poem lack this quality of innermost transparency. What Agamemnon says in the preliminary assembly of the princes—provided we assume no gap in the narrative—could only be explained with a certain effort. I am not the first to feel that something important remains unsaid at this point in the second book.

With bees, then, the peoples are compared. To designate the dissension of opinions prevailing within the whole of the people, Homer now introduces one of those hazy figures who, walking alongside the gods, represent as it were shadows that have not yet attained a firm personality.

In various passages of the Iliad, we find the *Ossa*. At times more a mere creature of thought, at times a firm personality. *Iris*, the *Dream*, and the *Aisa*, and the *Discord* who stirs the strife, also belong to these creatures, whom we encounter later in the plastic arts as well. Thus *Ossa* enters now to indicate the immense whirring of opinions that fills the assembly. Heralds order the peoples, and Agamemnon takes the floor.

We already know Homer's way of employing certain sensory means at transitions, which let them become imperceptibly more palpable. Now, time must be granted for the gradually entering silence, with which the speech of the king must be received, to subside into total stillness, and again the history of the origin of the scepter that Agamemnon carries is used for this purpose.

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No former young tree trunk, as with Achilles' staff of command, but a scepter of gold, a work of Hephaistos, which he himself had forged for Zeus's use. From Zeus's hands Hermes received the staff and gave it to Pelops, from whom Atreus received it. As his son, Agamemnon now carried it. While the history of the scepter is told, it seems as if all eyes turn more and more toward the king, and every word dies away. This scepter of divine origin forms the ideal center, as it were, of the army now assembled on the shore of the sea. Leaning upon it, Agamemnon begins a broad, calm exposition of the situation. A speech in which he makes the necessity of the return home so clear that we almost forget the secret thoughts he harbored within himself.

Let us hear:

> Friends, heroes, Danaans, servants of the god of war.
> Zeus has bound me with heavy tribulation:
> Before, he once promised me the city's destruction,

Now he commands us to return home without glory.
For it turns to our shame, without success
To beat about here with an enemy
Whose power is so slight that for one
Trojan, ten Achaeans could be reckoned.
But nine years have now passed,
And the wood on the ships rots and the rigging,
And our wives at home and the little children
Sit and wait for us, and our work
Finds no end, for which we set out.
Forward, away into the ships, to the beloved
Land of the fathers! away! for never will
Priam's city be conquered by us!
Thus spoke Agamemnon and stirred the heart
Of all together, even those who did not hear him,
And the assembly seethed like waves of the sea
Which the south and the east wind both provoke,
Or as when the west, falling upon the cornfields,
Burrows deep into the wide fields of ears:

Thus surged the peoples, with a cry
Rushing toward the ships, so that the dust
Whirled up and rose. They called
To one another to lend a hand
And to drag the ships down into the sea,
Drew away the beams and raised the masts,
And up to heaven pierced the cry
Of the Achaeans, who wanted to go home.

What then had happened? So convincingly, against his will, the son of Atreus spoke of return that the over-hasty Greeks do not let the princes—who were to have spoken against the king's opinion—have their say, and they storm toward the ships. The verses that report the futile efforts of the princes to check the movement we seek in vain. They too must have been

there, for it would again have too much contradicted Homer's manner not to portray these attempts of the princes, which had been announced.

Let us hear further now, however. From now on, not a syllable is missing from the narrative of what occurs.

> Then, even beyond fate,
> Return was granted the Greeks, if to Athena
> Hera had not now spoken: Woe to us!
> Homeward flee the Achaeans, for whose sake
> So many sank down on Trojan earth!
> But Helen remains! Up! hasten down,
> Hold back the host! And obedient to her,
> Athena hastened from the peaks of Olympus
> To the shore below and found Odysseus:
> By his dark, well-fitted ships
> He stood angry, without touching them,
> Because mourning filled his brow and his heart.
> And she began: Inventive Odysseus,
> Do you thus flee now? And leave the Trojans
> Helen here, for whose sake so many
> Of you sank down! Up, resist the people,
> Holding them back man by man with words!
> And he recognized that a goddess had spoken.
> Threw from his shoulder the cloak, which the herald
> Eurybates, who followed him from Ithaca,
> Picked up; he hastened to seek out Agamemnon,

> Grasp the scepter of the king, the inherited,
> Imperishable one, and hastening through the ships,
> Whomever he encountered, princes or otherwise
> Men of power and repute, to them he turned
> Softly the word: Wretched man, do you not feel
> The shame of running away so cowardly?
> Stand your ground, and hold the others back! Do you know

What the son of Atreus meant? What he spoke
Was only said to see how the people were minded.
And soon we shall feel his fists!
What he said, only few understood!
Him he can strike, with whom he is wroth,
He is king, and Zeus protects and nourishes him!
And where he met one of the common people
Clamoring and shouting, him he struck with the scepter
With threatening word: Wretched man! stand still!
Harken to those who are mightier than you!
You wish to count for something in battle? you in counsel?
Does everyone here want to play the king?
One commands, not all at once, only one,
In whose hands Zeus placed the scepter!
Thus through the host. And once more to the deliberation
The peoples rushed from the ships again,
Roaring, as when against the rocky shore the wave
Dashes, and the sea thunders.

Let us remember here how Homer in the first book, through scenes acting with gradually stronger sensory power, had arrived at the main scene of the quarrel between Achilles and Agamemnon. With the same strategy he prepares the main blow here as well: the renewed deliberation of the army taking place through Odysseus' intervention, in which a different decision is now made regarding staying or going.

The hero of this book is Agamemnon. We easily follow Homer's endeavor to keep him visibly in the foreground, speaking and acting, in this book. In order to achieve this right at the beginning of the second popular assembly now occurring, he sets against the king the no less visible Thersites, who belongs to the ingenious creations of world poetry. One of the most popular figures, at the same time, that a poet has ever allowed to appear. Hitherto we have had kings and heroes and inhabitants of Olympus before our eyes, figures to whom, for all their reality, an ideal, even slightly mythical varnish was given: with Thersites, realism comes into its right. Thersites is the incarnate critical spirit of the army.

It is the fatal fellow, never missing where it is a matter of the battle of words, who, cleverer than the others and observing more sharply, argues with inexorable logic. Who knows how to formulate what is the opinion of the majority. This figure has walked through all centuries from the beginning of human poetry. The deformity of the body belongs to it: in Aesop it has its most amiable, in Morolf its most loathsome representative. In Triboulet, Victor Hugo, in the barber of Louis XI, Walter Scott has let him live again.

> All sat now. Each where he belonged.
> Only Thersites' screeching had no end,
> Who, incessantly and wildly chattering in confusion,
> Against princes and people, what made them ridiculous,
> Let loose. Limping, squinting, lame and hunchbacked
> He set out for Ilion; the shoulders stood
> Narrow on him; his chest forward; and on the pointed
> Skull sparse hair growth. He was to all
> Repulsive, but to Achilles and Odysseus most of all,
> For those he barked at most; but now he turned
> Against the king.
>
> Well, son of Atreus?
> What is it again that you would like to snatch?
> Do you lack metal? fresh women?
> Whom we in the first place for you alone
> Always allot from the booty of the cities?
> Or is it gold this time? That a Trojan
> Might bring as ransom, because I or another
> Captured his son for him, and you would like
> To take what he brings? No, you likely lack
> One of those whom no other would have beside you?
> Something special for you? And he wants to be our
> Leader? Wants to give laws to this respectable
> Refuse of Greece, no, to these Greek women
> —For women we are after all—laws?
> Away home! Let us leave this one here

To gorge himself fat on goods and property, and let him see
Who stands up for him! Or even not! There he has

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Taken from him who is better than the whole host,
That which he nevertheless acquired for himself
In the strife! Yes, our great Achilles!
If he did not sit there as a weakling without gall,
Idle: You would have for the last time
Trespassed here, son of Atreus!

The attempt to translate this speech in its full effect will always fail because the actually popular value of the words and turns of phrase employed by the poet is lost forever.

Let us note that Homer lets Thersites be there suddenly. As it is indeed experienced: in a tense situation, there arises from a corner the piercing voice of a person who is repugnant to us, but who is immediately recognized as the ruling power. We do not know what Thersites is doing with the army. He was neither there before, nor does he appear again later. Did he belong, as we must never forget in the case of Falstaff, to the more noble folk? I have been of different opinions at different times. For however ugly Thersites may be in form, he is nonetheless involved in the war and has taken prisoners, which could admittedly be taken as boasting, but is yet brought forward in a manner that need have nothing ironic about it. As a merely scurrilous appendage of the army, he would perhaps have been permitted any criticism, but not at the same time to step forward with positive proposals. He demands something: one should go home. Surely he was accustomed to finding a hearing on all sides, and it is not the first time that he appears. Achilles and Odysseus, the two most trenchant speakers, he had mostly attacked until then. A clear-voiced speaker Odysseus calls him. Now Thersites sets upon Agamemnon. True, his attack against the king earns him a blow across the back from the scepter of Odysseus, so that he breaks out in howling; but besides that, Odysseus had also had to let him speak, no one had forbidden him the floor, no one interrupted him. With what art the poet has placed the uncomfortable, ridiculous, but not un-

dangerous man credibly and visibly! None of the heroes is so extensively and precisely described. As if with a Dutch brush he paints him.

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I remind you that on the pediments of the temple of Olympia, alongside the heroes appearing in ideal general facial features, the slaves receive individually humanly distinct countenances, so that they may be deprived of the appearance of the heroic, which belongs only to higher natures, since only simple, great feelings bestow it. For me, the figure of Thersites, drawn with a sure hand, is one of the proofs that Homer's age did not bourgeois-heroically have the heroic structure that the conditions in the camp of the Greeks seem to represent, but that they have only been artificially lent the ideally simple appearance that they seem to bear in such natural growth. [1]

[1] We also want to point out that Homer, by letting Odysseus accost high and low in coarse words, prepares us in a certain way for the tone in which Thersites then breaks out. But if Odysseus received a realistic shimmer through his coarse manner, this disappears entirely at Thersites' appearance. Odysseus is one of those who, within the scope of Iliad-poetry, have to think and act most complexly, who, unlike the others, cannot always show themselves with the same light and shadow sides. Odysseus has at times something official in his manner. Matters are incumbent upon him for whose accomplishment bourgeois experience is required. Such figures occasionally require within the poem an artificial reinforcement of the ideal shimmer, which they must never forfeit. We see in the Odyssey, in view of the same aesthetic demand, the beggar Irus appear, a figure bordering on caricature, upon whose entry Odysseus, who himself had been given the appearance of a beggar, rises above the mask. Irus, too, is the most precisely described figure in the Odyssey, and this is the reason why he, like Thersites, stands so highly visible before the eyes of us who are accustomed to the realistic. Both, Thersites as well as Irus, appear only once: as creatures of a lower order who, like animals, perform their services without developing.

How fortunately Thersites' impudent appearance initiates the resumption of the popular deliberation. His speech leads us back *in medias res* and effects the emotional reversal of the great mass, which is always favorably disposed when such a fellow is brought to silence on the spot. Thersites' irreverent attack on the king makes the return to the accustomed feelings of obedience easy.

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So completely does Odysseus now rule the heart of the people that soon the din of the cheering Achaeans resounds from the ships all around. Whoever could describe it thus must have had his own experiences behind him. Let us compare with this change of popular mood the scene in the Roman Forum, in which Shakespeare lets Antony accomplish something similar with his speech after Caesar's death. Antony moves the Romans more through ingenious play of thought, while Homer, in the speeches of Odysseus, Nestor, and Agamemnon that now follow one another, lets the factual-political element gradually press forward and become ever more effective. How gently and yet with cutting calculation Nestor knows how to draw the distinction between those who are cowardly and those who are brave, yet how a highest intensification of the martial mood finally takes place when Agamemnon openly confesses the mistake committed against Achilles.

This confession of Agamemnon's had been introduced by Homer. Already in the first book Nestor had proved him wrong and Agamemnon had recognized Nestor's speech as one rectifying the matters professionally. Briseis was nevertheless afterward led away from Achilles' tent, an action that must have insulted Nestor as well. Agamemnon, if he now voluntarily declared the taking away of Briseis to have been a mistake, gave not only Nestor thereby a silent declaration of honor, but achieved even more. Let us note well the finesse of this game. Agamemnon appears as a consummate diplomat: he lets disappear through his admission that which demoralized the host: Achilles' angry restraint. For the reconciliation with Achilles, now immediately impending, had to be received by the host as something occurring as a matter of course. The feeling of hopeful martial desire that fills the Greeks again becomes powerful in ourselves upon reading the

verses. A certain festive mood seizes us, just as the sight of grand public demonstrations sweeping away thousands of people often carries away even the stranger in the stream of participating enthusiasm. I attempt, again reduced to the mere content of thought, to translate the three speeches of Odysseus, Nestor, and Agamemnon.

Thersites, then, has given Odysseus a welcome opportunity to bring about the favorable turn, and the latter begins:

> Son of Atreus. Ruler. You before all
> Shall now stand insulted. To you the Greeks
> First vowed military following with a holy oath,
> And now a wailing sounds through the host, as if we were
> Women and children who desire to go home.
> Truly, who will not long for his own?
> And, were he but four weeks away from home,
> Not think of his wife in the distance, when he in the vessel,
> That the storms of winter overflow,
> Thinks backward — and we in the ninth year
> Sit and wait! — who would reproach us
> That we mourn? — but I ask, would it not
> Be a shame to return home empty now?
> Endure, friends, and hold out! It must
> Be clear at last whether what Calchas spoke
> Be lie or truth; and you all —
> To be sure, not those whom fate since then
> Struck down to the ground, they know it no more —
> All of you remember Calchas' words.
> Yesterday, or the day before it was — so it seems to me —
> When we came to Aulis with the ships,
> And there at the spring to the eternal gods
> Brought holy sacrifices. Under the shadow
> Of greening maple trees, where the water
> Wells up pure and noble, there happened
> That terrible sign. At the altar

A serpent suddenly wound itself upward,
Winding up to the branches of the tree,
Where on the outermost twig a nest lay hidden
With eight young ones, and above them the bird
That had laid the eggs and hatched them.
And the serpent, the twittering ones, all eight
It devoured, while the mother, shrieking loudly,
Fluttered over the nest mourning for the young.
But even her, catching her at the outermost wing,
The creature swallowed down. Then Calchas said:
Look up! nine years we shall fight,
But in the tenth we win the city.

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And so it will happen! —
Thus spoke Odysseus,
And the Achaeans all around immeasurably
Shouted to him exultantly.
And Nestor began:
Are we childish boys here with one another,
Who do not know how it goes in war?
Have we then not sworn holy oaths?
Was then all in vain, and what laboriously
Was discussed through and finally established,
Does it go up in smoke now? And oath and handshake
Are they done into the air? Be you, Agamemnon,
King now and leader of the Danaan people!
And if one or two set themselves aside
To speak of the return, let them speak!
We, however, go not, before we have recognized
Whether the son of Kronos deceived us or keeps his word!
I assert, he has on that day,
When we left the home with the ships,
Graciously beckoned, for it lightened and thundered to the right.
Let no one speak of return who has not previously

Had a Trojan woman in his arms,
Ere Helen's abduction and her sighing are avenged!
But if one absolutely wishes to sail home,
Good, so let him board his ship: his lot will be
To die even before the others! Now, Agamemnon,
Let the men divide themselves by tribes,
That the cowardly may part from the brave,
And it be manifest whether divine decree
Or human fear keeps us back from the city. —
And answering, Agamemnon rose:
Again the wisdom of your word conquers
All Achaeans. Holy gods, hear me!
If ten like you stood here at my side,
The city would have to fall, yet Zeus the son of Kronos
Sent down destructive strife and calamity.
For Achilles and I began to quarrel
About the girl, and I began! — let us
Both hold together united again,
Woe then to the Trojans! — but now
Let us strengthen ourselves with food and drink, and set
In order weapons and horses!

Following the line of thought of the three speakers, we admire how the poet lets each of them find the decisive words to change the army's mind, speaking from his own character— especially Agamemnon, who, as has already been said, once again allows a mere pretense to take place.

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Odysseus's speech is a masterpiece. This manner of appearing to concede everything in order to get a grip on the listeners' minds is the hallmark of great orators. The parenthetical remark which, with hidden effect, invalidates what the main clause contains, is common to both Shakespeare and Homer. The hypocritical acknowledgment of the longing for home, only to immediately make it appear in a different light, reminds one of the treatment of Brutus, whom the acknowledgment that he is an "honorable

man" only serves to pull down all the more deeply. The final outcome of the assembly is not in doubt for us.

At the beginning of the popular assembly, as it turns back toward the true heroic spirit, the poet had compared the influx of the people to the movement of ocean waves; they came on

> Roaring, as when against the rocky shore the wave
> Crashes, and the vast flood of the sea thunders.

At the close of the assembly, he returns to the sea with his comparison. But whereas in the two verses above the rock and sea were depicted in a simple thrust and counter-thrust, it says after Agamemnon's speech:

> So he spoke, and the roar of the Achaeans
> Echoed upward, as when the rising south wind
> Lashes the sea, and the wave bellows up the overhanging,
> Forward-leaning promontory,
> To which the billows, storming from all sides,
> Never grant rest. —

What a magnificent intensification of the melody, initially struck more softly, now through the intervening southern gale! A feeling of irresistible popular power reaches us from this comparison.

The assembly, then, is over. The performance of the sacrifice follows. Then eating and drinking and preparation for battle occur. And finally, it is reported with what infinite military power the Achaeans stand against the Trojans.

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For once, the listener must after all learn who was actually there. There has always been talk of the army and the ships: how many were they who set out? We recall the introduction to the tragedy by Aeschylus, the content of which is the downfall of the Persians: how there, in a choral song that sounds like a folk song, the power of the Persians is enumerated—those who had all set out from Asia against Greece and who must all perish.

Effective means are now employed to surround the departure of the Greeks for battle with splendor. Agamemnon forms the center. Around him are the princes, each ordering his hosts. With them is Pallas Athena, holding the Aegis, whose specific description reinforces the reality of her appearance. Again and again, we see the poet employ the artifice of deceiving us into accepting the entire appearance—including even the spiritual—through the precise representation of an external detail, as if the rest were just as real as the one small piece he places before our eyes in credible reality.

But other means are at Homer's disposal here.

He had compared the influx to the popular assembly with the swarming out of bees, which spread over the flowering meadow in thick, pressing masses. Now he lets no fewer than four fully realized comparisons follow close upon one another, to impress upon us the immensity of the throng and the innumerability of the Greek army hosts.

The first:

> As when flames seize the infinite forest
> High on the ridge of the mountain,
> And in the distance the fiery glow is to be seen:
> So the flashing weapons of those marching forward
> Shone far-visible up to the ether.

Without transition, he hastens to the second image:

> And like the many nations of flying birds,
> Geese and cranes and long-necked swans,
> Over marshy meadows at the riverbank
> Frolic through the air with beating wings and cries:

> So from the ships poured the Achaeans
> Into the plain, so that the Scamander's moist
> Level trembled from the tramping of men
> And of steeds, and so at the bank of the river

Thousands trod down the flowers there,
Innumerable as the flowers and leaves of spring itself.

But even that does not suffice him, and without transition, a new image:

And like the many nations of innumerable flies
That swarm greedily around the shepherd's pen,
When in spring the milk fills the buckets:
So the Achaeans, full of desire to annihilate the Trojans
In battle upon the plain.

One should note how each image characterizes a different inner action.

First, the marching of the army as a natural event; then the forward-moving throng to arrive at the spot; then the awakening lust for battle at the sight of the enemy.

And finally, the ordering of themselves for the attack. This last image, too, is joined to the preceding ones without transition.

And as shepherds easily separate grazing herds of goats
That have mixed, the princes establish
Order for the battle: in their midst
Agamemnon the king, gaze and head
Like thunder-rejoicing Zeus! Girt
Like the god of war! But from shoulder to shoulder
Like Poseidon! And as the bull in the herd
Towers high as he walks among the cattle:
So Zeus glorified him this day,
That he appeared greater than all heroes.

With what strength does that which I call the musical content confront us in these four comparisons. Starting anew each time, they end in a gentle flow as a glorification of the king.

Let us also note how Homer encompasses heaven, sea, and earth in these comparisons. First, those two powerful images that lead us to the coast, where waves and rocks are in conflict. Then the mountains, on which the vast forest goes up in flames.

Then the realm of the air, in which the birds frolic. Then the meadow at the bank of the river, where the flowers stand. Then the milk buckets, which never run dry in spring, swarmed over by flies. And finally, the shepherds with the goats and the peaceful herd of cattle.

Recall how Homer concluded the first book, which encompasses so many storms, with the banquet and the sleep of the gods. Note how he leads us over here now, with the most peaceful of all images, to the terrible battle that brings so much destruction and disaster.

But what aesthetic purpose does this endeavor serve—to fill the imagination with landscape visions almost to the point of overflowing?

We stand only in the middle of the book, the second half of which, according to superficial judgment, would now contain nothing more in several hundred verses capable of moving the imagination. This second half of the book, which brings the enumeration of the Greek forces before Ilion, required something powerful to maintain the poetic mood. The four world-encompassing landscape images are intended for this. They have impressed themselves upon us as a background against which the figures of the Greek heroes now pass by in a long row, and the cities and fortresses also seem to rise, which are listed as their ancestral homes. Homer has once again expanded our horizon. Until now, we knew only the Greek camp on the Trojan coast: it is time to cast a glance at the land that has now lain far in the distance for the Greeks for nine years, where their wives and children await them. Homer always encompasses the whole. We are today least suited to empathize with the impression this second, seemingly dryly reporting part of our book once made on the listeners. It contains the description of the fatherland. Such was once the nature of Greek power. The sea was the home of this people. What rises from the sea, on the islands and all around on the land in a wide circle, forms and surrounds the fatherland of the Greeks.

How the individual listeners of Homer must have taken notice when the passage speaking of them came its turn! And in all later times: how the sight of this enormous flood of ancestral waters must have uplifted the succeeding generations and reminded them of the primal times when the world and Greece were one! Thus would listeners today perk up if, in a poem celebrating the war of 1870, the individual armies and regiments had been listed and characterized. Mere names and seemingly dry numerical data will come to life in memory and wind themselves again with fresh wreaths. Just see how the soldier today perks up when the number of his regiment is mentioned.

But if we let these verses glide through the soul as a song of praise for the glory of the land of the Achaeans—what a wonderful after-echo the poet provides us at their end! With Agamemnon's appearance, the fourth of those great landscape paintings had concluded; his power is praised as the highest within the Greek military force; Agamemnon's glory fills the entire second book—yes, and even now, when in the enumeration the turn comes to Achilles, nothing is said that would let his absence from the battle appear disastrous at this point. Only Achilles' beauty is mentioned here once more in passing. Nireus, one of the commanders who came from Syme, was said to have been more beautiful than all others, only Achilles more beautiful than he; but Nireus is un-warlike and came with only a few ships. With Achilles, by contrast, when the turn comes to him, his grief for the lost Briseis is brought more strongly into the foreground by the telling of how he once won her in heavy combat, whereupon the poet continues in the enumeration of the commanders and the ships and the ancestral fields.

Spatially, this second half of the second book corresponds to the second half of the first, which was dedicated to the activity of the Olympians.

Just as the life in the palaces of the gods and goddesses there finally so occupies our imagination that the fates of the Greeks recede, so our memory is so filled here with the never-ending enumeration of the heroes and cities and ships that we turn away from the Trojan coast, as if by a sensory compulsion, toward the broad view of the Greece of that time.

But the poet only wanted us that far in order to introduce Achilles once more after all with a few final words!

The heroes themselves have been listed, when it occurs to the poet to say another word about the excellence of their steeds. The best are those of Eumelus, swift as birds, of like coat, of like age, of like height across the back, both mares and spreading terror when they fly across the plain. The strongest of all men, Homer continues, is the Telamonian Ajax, as long as Achilles kept himself away in wrath. For Achilles was stronger than all, just as his steeds were also stronger.

> But he sat by the dark, wave-furrowing
> Ships, wroth at the king, and his peoples
> Filled the hours of the day on the shore of the sea with discus throwing
> And with bow and arrow.
> But the steeds themselves tore the lotus
> Here and there from the ground with their muzzles:
> Lotus and parsley, which grow in swamps,
> While the chariots of the leaders well-packed
> Stood still in the tents, and their masters,
> Drifting about here and there in the camp,
> Inactive in the stillness, longed for the fight.

How, with this sight, everything is suddenly extinguished in our imagination that had been rekindled by joyful expectation. These few content-rich words spread over Agamemnon with his hopes of victory like a thick fog. Zeus's ill will toward the Greeks—although Homer says nothing of it here—returns to our soul as that which will make the impending exertion of the king and his heroes into futile efforts. Yes, even more: a last echo of the reviling by Thersites had remained unconsciously in our memory and begins now to sound softly: the feeling that what Thersites spat out in accusations against the king did after all express the final basic mood of the people against Agamemnon.

Something indestructible lay in the stains attached to the king. An indescribable, as if expanding, sensory force sticks in the verses painting the dark inactivity of Achilles and the loitering of his people. But a feeling of guilt already blows toward us from it, which Achilles has begun to heap upon himself with the inactive lying-about and loitering to which he forces his people. —

The second book, as far as the Greeks are concerned, is at an end here. We expect the battle in the next book. Before its beginning, however, the poet wishes to introduce, alongside the Greeks and the gods, the third element that participates in the struggle: the city of Priam and those who inhabit it. Only three names from the Trojan side have been mentioned until now: Priam, Hector, and Helen. But they are just that—mentioned. While the camp of the Greeks and the sea and Olympus stand before our eyes in firm images, the city whose conquest had been promised to the besiegers still lies as if in a far, misty distance.

We have admired the art with which Homer lets the scene change in the first book: in the second, he gives us a new opportunity for this. From the tents of Agamemnon, he leads us to those of Nestor. The field opened up where the Greeks hold their assembly. In the midst of the ships, we then stand, which are being pulled into the sea. Then the immense panorama of the Greek world, which passes by, finally to let us return to the camp of Achilles. Homer's principle is never to leave the imagination empty in terms of landscape. At the end of the second book, he now brings us in one stroke into the middle of the city, before the gates of the royal palace. We are snatched away from the camp of the Greeks, which is now shown to us only from a distance, as the Trojans had it before their eyes looking down from the walls of the city. Already in the first book, the poet had thus transported us from the camp to the heights of Olympus.

Homer chooses one of the means that are peculiar to him. Iris, a messenger of Zeus, has seen what is being prepared in the Greek camp and flies, at Zeus's command, swift as the wind to the city to bring word of it to

the Trojans. We receive only a short scene now, but it unfolds an image for us that leads us deep into Trojan affairs.

It was said how the poet reveals to us in the first book, with only slight indication, what led the Greeks before Troy. In the quarrel of the princes, Achilles mentions the destruction of the city quite in passing as the self-evident thing for the sake of which one left the fatherland, and here and there in occasional mention it is further spoken of, without then saying for what reason Troy is to be destroyed. Priam and Priam's sons are also mentioned. But even at the banquet, in the palace of Olympus, we hear from none of the gods that he, in contrast to Zeus, is inclined toward the Trojans.

If we ask why the poet proceeded thus, the answer seems to lie close at hand: that Homer did not think he had to tell first what everyone knew. But this answer perhaps does not contain the truth. Today in the theater, we all know beforehand how *Hamlet* ends, but there was a day when the audience filling the house knew only what the poet revealed to them from scene to scene. To Homer's audience, too, the battles before Troy must once have been sung for the first time, and they perhaps knew nothing then except what was revealed to them from verse to verse. But Homer loves to let the coming things resonate beforehand for a while with softer tones. Only then was the talk to be of the Trojans in full scope when their fates began to intervene in the events with full force.

Hera, when she sends Athena down so that Odysseus may halt the flight of the Greeks, mentions Helen first; and in Nestor's speech, held in the great assembly, Helen is mentioned for the first time among the Greeks—she whose lonely sighs it is the duty of the Greeks to avenge. Thus Voss translates; but it can also only mean: whose abduction and distresses are to be avenged.

What did she sigh for? What had Priam's sons to do with Helen? Paris has not yet been named; so Hector perhaps, whose name is pronounced in Agamemnon's speech? Agamemnon does not wish to rest until he has burst the latter's breastplate, so that he, lying on his face, gnashing his teeth, bites

into the dust. Why? Only in the enumeration of the Greek military force, when the turn comes to Menelaus, do we learn that Menelaus's heart has burned most of all to avenge Helen.

As people knowing so little, Iris now leads us into the assembly of those who within Troy hold counsel at the gate of the Priamean palace. Old men and youths, forming an assembly. The mere fact that young and old deliberate peacefully together, that there is talk neither of noble nor lowly, and that resolutions are not hastily formed but only the welfare of the realm is calmly spoken of, introduces us to conditions that are different from the Greek ones. We breathe city air. One does not live in tents but in houses and palaces, behind walls. One finds oneself at war, but the danger seems to lie far off outside.

Polites, one of the king's numerous sons, had been sent out on that day to observe the enemies. Sitting on the height of a burial mound, he sees the Achaeans rolling toward them. In the form of this Polites, Iris appears at the gate of the palace, and her address to the king paints Priam's mental state. An old man for whom the sons act. Iris begins with a reproach. "Old man," the apparent Polites addresses Priam, "you have always comforted yourself with uncritical chatter, just as you did then when you did not want to believe in the war that has broken out endlessly. Often enough have I fought in bloody battles, but never have I seen a people like the Greeks, who move upon the city numerous as the leaves of the forest or as the sand of the sea." The city has many allies, he continues, who, speaking different languages, do not understand one another: to each of these hosts let their ruler now assign the place for battle, but let Hector order the citizens for the fight.

The word "citizens" sounds strange to our ears. With this, Iris has fulfilled her mission, and the scene breaks off. Neither Helen, nor the one of Priam's sons to whom she belongs, nor Hector do we see. The glimpse into Troy ceases again, like a sunbeam breaking through the clouds to make a piece of the landscape bright for a minute and then letting it sink back into shadow. No more words fall. But the Trojans also set themselves in motion. At a hill lying before the city, they halt and place themselves in battle order. The rest

of the book is dedicated to the enumeration of the city's military power. Here the poet need not be expansive. His listeners are on the side of their own people; no one expects to hear from the side of the Trojans what concerns them more closely. In the first place, Homer calls Hector's troops the most numerous and the best. It was said thus also of Agamemnon's troops. But to the Trojans, the praise of having stood in good order for the battle is not accorded in equal measure.

Once more, however, at the close of the enumeration, Achilles is mentioned. In connection with Nastes, the leader of the Carians, who went into battle adorned like a girl. But all his gold was not able to save him, it continues, which the strong Achilles carried away as booty. Nastes reminds one of that Nireus whose beauty equaled that of Achilles, but who was unwarlike and came with only three ships. Homer hints at a future time when Achilles will again take part in the fight.

The second book does not fade out, but rather stops abruptly. Sometimes I think it ought to have closed where the inactive existence of Achilles and the Myrmidons is depicted, whereupon the appearance of Iris in Troy would have made a beautiful opening for the third book. The hundred verses taken away from the second book in this manner would also seem to benefit the third book's proportions. But then I tell myself again that the glimpse into the city is a necessity as a prelude to what the third book will bring, and that placing it at the beginning of the third would disturb its economy.

As for the poet's falling silent, this corresponds to the conclusions of most books of the poem—those excepted, for instance, which end with falling asleep, like the first. It is as if Homer had wanted to continue and as if, becoming aware that enough had been said for this time, he interrupts himself in the flow of speech.

Homer's way of letting the scene change—as if only fragments of poetry of different origins were strung together and the last fragment were the last only by chance—we find nowhere so clearly repeated as in Shakespeare. He allows the seemingly most careless tossing together of scenes to prevail precisely where the spiritual thread is pulled tightest. In *The Winter's Tale*

or *Cymbeline*, for example. He seems to have cut out this or that scene from half a dozen dramas—half or not even half—and to have linked these cutouts together crudely. Yet, if we look to the purely spiritual, no seam is shown anywhere, no gap, no too-little or too-much; rather, under a sketch-like appearance, a perfect work of art.

Third Book

In the third book, Homer abandons the panoramic treatment of things. He no longer merely strings scenes together but develops them from one another. I said above that the first book has, as it were, two overtures; one could call the first two books a double overture to the entire *Iliad*. A foretaste is given in them of what we are to expect. They contain more facts than cohesive action, more images following one another freely than the later being demanded by the earlier. Only the third book introduces us, in a cohesive report, to the causes of the great war, which was tacitly presupposed as an existing element.

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Homer, before he lets the battles begin—which according to Zeus's promise are not to come to a decision in favor of the Greeks without Achilles' reentry—must finally let the woman become visible who was to blame for all the disaster. A superior artistic intellect speaks from the poet's way of bringing Helen before our eyes. She is too beautiful to be described. He lets us only sense her appearance. Like an artist who lets the power of sunlight show only in the brightness of what it illuminates.

The poet introduces our book with two comparisons, one dedicated to each of the two peoples. Both images merge in our imagination into a single landscape painting. From the city come the Trojans like flocks of cranes which, fleeing from the wintry rainfalls, hasten screaming toward the ocean and swoop down for battle with the pygmies. Silently, the Achaeans come toward them from the sea.

As the south wind pours down mist upon the mountain peaks,

Little desired by the shepherd,
But more convenient for the thief than night,
Where one sees only as far as a thrown stone flies:
So there rose up under the hurrying feet
Dust in clouds up across the plain.

A landscape stands before us as if we remembered it. On the left, threatening rain clouds from which the cranes descend; in the middle, the shore of the sea; on the right, the mountains covered by mist. Dust rises. Heaven and earth are filled. Air, clouds, birds, sea, mountains, grazing herds, shepherds and thieves, and with it the noise and the tramping of the two armies. And from the broad mass of this sight shines out the figure of him who brought the enemies into the land: Paris, or, as Homer provides double names for some figures, the divine hero Alexandros.

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He with the panther's skin over his shoulders,
With the curved bow and the sword,
And carrying two bronze-tipped spears,
Now called out the best of the Greeks to the fight.

Seemingly a heroic appearance. And how contemptible the same man's sudden disappearance at the appearance of Menelaus, when the latter, finally to cool his revenge, following his challenge, leaps down from the chariot.

Just as a lion, encountering greater prey,

Scaring off dogs and hunters, flings himself upon the stag

Or the mountain goat.

Battle and defeat, but not the trembling cowardice of the thief, is expected of us.

Just as a man recoils in terror from a snake

That shoots forth from the thicket deep in the mountains,

So Alexandros's limbs trembled there.

Colorless and pale, he vanished among the others.

And then Hector's speech, in which he, furious with shame, tells his brother the truth. And then the submissiveness with which Paris listens to Hector. I attempt to give Hector's scornful words this time in iambic form, roughly as if it were a passage from Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*.

Δύσπαρις, "Ill-fated Paris," Hector calls his brother.

Bad-luck Paris! Seducer of women! Handsome man!
You would have been better off unbegotten,
Instead of, together with the wife you brought home,
Being greeted with laughter by Trojans and by Greeks.
How miserably you stand before all,
Powerless pretty fellow!
Where did you get the courage, across the sea
That has no beams, to steal this woman,
Sister-in-law of warlike men?
Who appeared here for disaster to your father, to the citizenry,
Desired only by Troy's enemies,
To your own eternal shame?
You did not dare to wait for the husband:
Secretly you went away; he truly would
Have shown you what kind of man's wife

You carried off! Then Aphrodite,
Your lute-playing and your curled hair
Would not have protected you: in the dust you would lie
With a coat of stones upon your shoulders!

Note the difference in accent between Hector's speech and the words that usually fall between the princes in the Greek camp. The latter bellow at each other with natural coarseness, as if they knew no other tone. Soldierly roughness resounds toward us; from Hector's mouth, we receive the outburst of indignation of an otherwise calm man, driven by outrage to a

language that is not merely to thunder against but to penetrate the flesh with cutting accents.

His intention is to move Paris to battle through the mockery he pours over him. Abashed and submissive, Paris admits his brother is right, but dares to remind him that it is not a matter of common robbery but the acceptance of a goddess's gift. It had been Aphrodite's work that such seductive beauty played about Paris. To win a daughter of Zeus at a goddess's behest was nothing that deserved reproach. Paris hints this to his brother. He is ready to fight Helen's husband. Together with her riches, let her fall to the victor. Hector undertakes to halt the clash of the two armies, and negotiations for the duel begin with Menelaus. These things are executed powerfully and with the breadth that Homer's audience required for discussions of this kind. Heralds go to the city to fetch sacrificial animals and to lead out old Priam, in whose presence the judgment of God is to be solemnly prepared.

And now we see Helen appear.

In the first book she was not there; in the second she was mentioned once in passing, in a way that speaks in her favor. Homer's hints do not reject the view that Helen longs for home with remorse. We condemn, but we do not hate her. Like all women of poetry, she appears as never aging, in the permanent possession of youthful freshness.

Equipped with irresistible charm and coming across the sea in divine ordinance, a king's son had persuaded her to flee. A handsome stranger appearing from Asiatic city life in the lonely, sea-enclosed Peloponnese—mountainous Argos, where the wives of the men absent on eternal war voyages felt abandoned. Paris lets Helen sense a higher enjoyment of life in the distance. Not common shipbuilders, but artists had prepared his ships. With all her riches, the princely woman sets out on her flight. We think of Cleopatra and Antony. As the daughter of Zeus, Helen enters Troy, where Paris built his palace with the city's most distinguished architects. But the time of disillusionment had begun. To the Trojan people and the family of

Priam, Helen is hated. And she herself must think back to what she left behind. With such feelings for and against her, we await her presence.

Again, Iris is at the poet's service to transport us from the midst of the two armies about to clash into the palaces of Priam and his children. Where things go quietly, as we imagine the dwellings of kings, and where she finds Paris's wife at the loom. Homer loves sudden transitions from noise to silence.

Note how he softens the responsibility of both Helen and Alexandros by weaving in the gods. Even today, in fatalistic moods, we assume an unconsciously co-commanding fate alongside conscious responsibility. And now we shall see with what art almost the last remnant of guilt is detached from Helen.

Iris, as gods and messengers of the gods sometimes do, assumes a mask. In the form of Laodice, the most beautiful among the daughters of Priam, she enters and finds Helen weaving a garment, large, double-folded, and purple-colored, into which she weaves battle scenes from the war being fought over her person.

Standing close beside her, the disguised Laodice begins. "Dear sister-in-law," she says, "get up if you want to see Trojans and Achaeans fight; the battle in the plain below is beginning. But now they all suddenly rest, leaning on their shields and their spears thrust into the ground. Paris and Menelaus will fight with spears for you, and to the one who defeats the other, you shall fall."

> Thus speaking, the goddess let longing
> Flow gently into her heart, and she thought
> Of her first husband, her city, and her parents.
> And throwing a white veil about her,
> She went out of the chamber with tearful eyes,
> And arrived where the Scaean gate was. [1])

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[1]) There sat Priam, Panthous, and Thymoetes,

Lampus, Clytius, Hicetaon, Ucalegon,
Antenor: the elders of the people, at the Scaean gate;
Whom age forbade to fight along,
Whose voice was only weak, like the crickets'
Tender chirping that swarms out along the edge of the forest
From the spring-green bushes;
So now the elders of the people sat at the tower.
But when they saw Helen coming to the tower,
They spoke in low whispers to one another:
Who will blame Trojans and Greeks
For fighting so long over a woman like this?
One who sees the goddess rightly through her eyes!
But let it be! even if she were still more beautiful:
Away to the ships with her, so that to our children
And to ourselves no disaster grows from it!
Thus they spoke. But Priam called
Helen to him: "Here, sit down
Beside me, dear child, so that you see your first
Husband and your friends and your relatives—
You cannot help it, the gods have that
On their conscience, who brought the sad war
With the Achaeans into the land to me!—now say,
Who is that one of mighty stature?
Though others also tower up like him,
Yet none of such majesty did
My eyes ever see, and like a king he walks."

And the divine woman: "O dear father,
Before you I must be ashamed and you frighten me!
Ah, I should have died then,
When your son led me here with him
And I left my bed and my child and my friends and my
Noble relatives. It was not to be so!
Ah, and I weep for it. But because you ask:

That one there is Agamemnon, the son of Atreus!
King, mighty and powerful and strong in battle!
Ah, my brother-in-law he was. He it was!”
But Priam, looking down in wonder, cried:
“Fate-favored, happy son of Atreus,
How many peoples are now subject to you!
Once when I was young and went to Phrygia,
I saw splendid people there; then I fought
Against the Amazons themselves,
Who fought like men—but even then
I saw no army like that of the Achaeans today!”
But seeing Odysseus, he asked further:
“Now, however, that one, dear child, who is that there,
Taller even than the son of Atreus, broader of shoulder?
Before him the weapons lie on the earth,
And he himself strides through the men,
As through the flock a mighty ram pushes through.”

That is Odysseus, Helen explains further. And Antenor takes the floor to report how he himself once hosted Odysseus in Troy with Menelaus, when both had come to the city to negotiate on Helen’s account. And then he tells further how they had appeared to them then.

Standing, Menelaus towered higher,
But if they both sat, then Odysseus was
More majestic; and when both spoke,
Menelaus spoke little and quickly and sharply,
For short and to the point and on the matter
He was focused and fewer years he counted.
But when then the clever Odysseus rose,
He stood there and looked down before him,
Eyes fixed on the ground before him,
And the staff in his hand did not move,
Neither backward nor forward, but firmly
He braced it, like a man searching for words
Who has lost his thoughts from excitement.

Yet when then from his chest the great voice
Pressed forward like a snowstorm of words:
No one then would have opposed him!—
Only then did we realize what the man meant!
But seeing Ajax for the third,
The old man wanted to know from her: “Who is that
Other Achaean man, so large and powerful,
Who towers with his shoulders above the others?”
But Helen: “That one of mighty
Stature is Ajax; and the other there
Is Idomeneus, whom Menelaus and I
Often hosted when he came from Crete,
And it is his people who surround him.
But, what is that?—I recognize them all again,
And by name I could designate them to you,
Only two I see nowhere, my brothers,
Castor not and Polydeuces not!
Did they both then remain at home?
Or did they come along from Lacedaemon,
But do not want to fight because the shame
I brought upon them, they feel too deeply?”
But the brothers lay both long ago
Deep in the earth of the dear fatherland.

No one who has lost siblings will read these last two verses without being shaken. This scene, which breaks off abruptly here, is one of the most beautiful that human poetry has produced. This has often been felt.

Note the intensive power with which it touches our imagination. Homer places things directly before our eyes. Let everyone bring to light from memory the scenes by which he has been most moved by the feeling of experiencing it himself. Let us say scenes from *Hamlet*, or from *Faust*, or from ancient literature those of Aeschylus: how Cassandra does not want to enter the house of Agamemnon; or Alcibiades’ challenge to Socrates in Plato’s *Symposium*; or wonderful passages from Pindaric odes—everywhere

highly vivid paintings, but where in so few words the matter itself as here? One feels the ashlar blocks of the Scaean tower, from which the old men peer down, as if with one's hands; one seems to see Helen approaching in the light veil she quickly took up.

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And the low whispering of the elders and the kindness of the old ruler, who well realizes that the enchanting daughter-in-law was the plaything of superior demons.

An excusing feeling creeps over us. We see the woman carrying her burden of conscience with her. In a survey of what the *Iliad* contains up to this point, we penetrate no one's soul—Achilles excepted—so deeply as Helen's here. The most noble and enchanting princess of the globe is confused in spirit by the gods to leave husband, child, brothers, and fatherland, to seek an existence incomprehensible to herself, of a different kind. And now she has to endure it. From now on, Homer's poem contains, alongside Achilles and Thersites, the third figure of whose existence we are convinced.

But Menelaus, Agamemnon, and Odysseus also now possess more real images for us. I pointed out how it is Homer's way to let us gradually become acquainted with the people. One thing follows another: suddenly the figure stands there finished. These three he let appear until then only in action, without granting us a sight of them. They do not belong to the select row of those of whom, as with Achilles, it sufficed to say: the strongest and most beautiful of all! They need something that distinguishes them from others. For Agamemnon to step before us, Priam must now describe him to Helen. With the other two, the poet rises even higher in the art of introducing the most important thing as if only in passing: one of the ancient Trojans raises his weak voice to report on them. These portraits testify to the immense literary culture that must have surrounded Homer.

Priam had been requested outside the walls. With the "sons" alone, Menelaus had declared, he would have nothing to do. We shall later learn the full meaning of these words. Priam is ancient and optimistic. He no longer fights along and speaks conciliatory words. Only in the twenty-

fourth book of the *Iliad* do we experience the completion of this figure, whose growth advances slowly in the course of the poem.

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Note how Homer also never repeats himself here, never gives unnecessary things, but stone upon stone raises the pedestal higher on which he wishes to place Hector's father. Homer is always conscious of what has been said by him before, and knows at which point to give the listener what is still unknown.

With Priam, Homer transports us again to the plain outside, where the armies stand close opposite one another. The agreements are concluded. Paris, usually intervening only as an archer without heavy armor, puts on the breastplate of one of his brothers. From the wall, the Trojan men and women take part in the proceedings. The lots fall as to which of the two shall have the first spear-throw. Paris: the point of his spear bends on the shield boss of Menelaus, who for his part would now have struck Paris mortally, had Aphrodite not protected her favorite. By her hand he is suddenly transported into the royal citadel of Troy.

Now something occurs there that gives Helen's character a higher consecration and explains her flight and the tormenting conflict of her feelings.

Paris appears more unfortunate than weak toward Menelaus this time, for it is not his fault that the point of his lance bends. In general, he does have something un-resistant in his nature, he gives way; but with his distinction, Homer avoids letting him appear powerless. He presents him as a kind of human being apart. Paris is the good marksman grown up in the luxury of a rich city, as little made to withstand one of the sons of Atreus as a modern man, whose weapons had been taken from him, would feel sufficiently armed with a club against a savage. Paris belongs to a finely civilized people. When we see him and Menelaus standing opposite each other, we feel the inequality; one grants the latter the easy victory, but one is also glad when at the decisive moment Aphrodite bursts the helmet strap by which Menelaus finally packs Helen's abductor to strangle him as he pulls

him away. Suddenly Paris is gone! What happens now is the decisive thing for Helen’s character.

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The goddess set Paris down in the chamber,
Which the breath of fragrance filled, and went
To call Helen. And she found her
Upon the palace roof, where Trojan women
Stood with her in a multitude, and by the garment
Softly seizing her, she nudged her with her hand,
Like to the ancient stewardess in form,
Who knew how to pluck the wool so beautifully
Already in Lakedaemon, when she still kept house there,
And whom Helen loved. Resembling this one
The goddess addresses Helen: come quickly!
Paris demands you! come with me home!
Where he awaits you upon the swelling couch,
Radiant in beauty! No one would think of battle,
Each of dance and of bliss at the sight of him!
But Helen’s heart reared up within her,
When she heard that; yet now the goddess’s
Powerful, luxuriant majesty stood before her eyes,
And recognizing the sparkling divine glances
She started and cried: Deceiver, will you
Now entice me again, just as back then?
Shall I perhaps through the Phrygian cities
Further away, because there or here someone
Is dear to you, and Menelaos now my husband
Struck down, in order to lead me, poor woman,
Back home again? There you steal near again
Cunningly! so go there yourself then,
Give yourself up and give up the divine business!
And may your foot never tread Olympus again!
But rather toil away and run after him,
Until he takes you as wife, or as a maid!

I to Paris now? For him I make the bed
No more! For that would not be fitting! All
The Trojan women would censure me,
And I have enough to bear within myself!
But falling into a rage Aphrodite shrieked
At Helen: do not provoke me, audacious one!
If I go from you now in anger, I shall hate you
In the future just as glowingly as I love you;

And between Trojans and Danaans I will sow
Mischief, which will be terrible, and you yourself
Will perish in the great destruction!
And Helen trembled when she heard that,
She, the daughter of Zeus! She gathered the white
Veil together and went and spoke no word more.
None of the Trojan women had noticed it,
For it was a daemon who strode before her.
And they came to the beautiful palace of Paris,
And the maids turned quickly to their work,
And to her high consort went the woman,
And the lovely-smiling Aphrodite
Fetched the chair, carrying it herself,
And opposite Paris she moved it,
And the daughter of the aegis-shaking highest god,
Helen, sat herself down upon it,
Turned her eyes away and spoke to her husband:
Already back from the battle? It would have been best
If you had died under the hands of that one there,
Who as a man of strength cast you down,
And who was my first husband! Formerly, to be sure,
You wished to be stronger than he, you boasted
Of vanquishing him with your own hands.
Go then and challenge him again!
No, rather stay at home and take good care

Not to come under the fist of the fair-haired
Menelaos once more, for his spear
Would kill you.
But taking up the word
Paris said: Woman, not with such heavy
Reproach shall you burden my soul.
If Menelaos conquered, then Athena was
Helpful to him; I shall challenge him again,
And there are gods also on our side.
Therefore come, and let us rest together,
Peacefully, for never has longing so completely
Filled my senses, not even back then,
When I led you away from Lakedaemon
And on the flight the island of Kranaë first
Granted us rest and marriage.
Just as back then you stand enchanting before me!
Thus speaking he went ahead to the couch
And the wife followed his steps.
So now they both rested beside one another.

But the son of Atreus like a provoked beast of prey
Stormed through the throng, whether he might anywhere
Espy the vanished Paris.
But no Trojan was able to show Paris
To Menelaos: had one seen him,
Not out of friendship would he have hidden him!
For they all hated him unto death.
But Agamemnon cried: Trojans, hear me:
Menelaos was the victor! Give back the woman
And her treasures and pay a fine,
As is fitting for you and which for all the future
Shall be established! Thus spoke Atreus' son
And the other Achaeans shouted approval.

A magnificent contrast. From the midst of the silent bedchamber of the reconciled spouses we are torn back into the battle. The third canto seemed to want to close like a symphony in a long-drawn-out sweet tone: all at once the wild cry of Agamemnon breaks in again.

Homer shows himself from a new side with Helen. He does not wish to gloss over, he only wishes to explain. The scene between the goddess, who would have everything on her conscience if anything like a conscience were alive in her, and Helen, who almost succumbs to her conscience without being able to resist the powers that still continually increase her guilt, lets us divine what experiences Homer himself might have had. Such deep symbolism does not fly to the poet out of nothingness. Helen's speech, with which she seeks to reject the goddess, and her yielding and succumbing almost rehabilitate her. She sees the moment approaching where Menelaos, whom she hotly admires and esteems highly, will snatch her from the situation whose unworthiness she feels. There the seductress stands beside her again! As Aphrodite touches her in the form of the old servant, Helen scents only a trick. She suspects a new, unknown adventure for which she is to be misused. Again, she thinks, she is to fall as a reward to some discarded lover of her sister. And now she learns what actually occurred. The blood of Zeus revolts in her veins. She knows that the Trojan women hate her: but now she would be despised by them!

And what a succumbing! How much, let us say again, must the poet have carried within himself in terms of experiences to place the two sisters thus side by side. We know how Kriemhild and Brunhild, how Elizabeth and Mary seek to outdo one another; here we have the oldest example of such a struggle. Helen and Aphrodite break loose against each other, and rank and power carry the victory. Even of the family of Zeus, Helen knows only too well that one must not fall out with the Olympian rulers. The moment where she, gathering the veil together, follows silently, is a tragic one. Once more she seeks to resist the man whom she despises—but Aphrodite stupefies her. One of the passages that sounds like bitter irony is the verse where Homer, as Helen is about to yield, calls her the "daughter of

aegis-shaking Zeus," epithets that otherwise fall to the lot of goddesses only.

Helen's inner fate seems to be fulfilled here. And yet the poet has found a reconciliation. Only by two people in Troy is Helen understood: by Priam, who himself was connected in ancient kinship with the gods, and by Hector, whose bourgeois-pure nobility of soul stood up for her who, after all, now formed a part of the family. Helen beholds in Hector the only man who measures up to Agamemnon and Menelaos and to her brothers. A spiritual elective affinity forms between them, which makes it possible for Homer to let Helen appear in yet another new form.

I take a few steps ahead.

In the sixth canto the battle rages between the Trojans and Greeks. Hector hurries into the city to fetch Paris, who is keeping away from the fight. Paris's behavior shows him here from a new side. After he played such a sorry role toward Menelaos, he finds it convenient to take offense at the judgment that friends and enemies had to pass upon him. He keeps himself in his house as if one were living in peace:

Then Hector entered. The eleven-cubit long
Spear in his fist, whose bronze gold-encircled
Point flashed afar. And he found
Paris, as he with splendid armor-ornament,
Shield and breastplate, busied himself, as he
Examining inspected the curved bows.
But Helen sitting among the maids
Instructed them how they were to weave.
Perceiving this he cried with rebuking words:
Wretch, now you wish to play the sensitive one here?
For your sake the peoples perish!
For your sake the glow of war blazes
Roundabout Ilion's walls: would you not
Assail him who now would not fight?
Up, if Troy is not to stand in flames now!

And Alexandros: Hector, not without justice
Do you censure me, yet you err if you believe
That I keep myself here at home out of a grudge.
Yes, I had wished it, but then Helen
Entreated me sweetly and soothingly, in the battle
To participate after all, and in my opinion
I should do it, for victory turns shiftily
Thither and hither. I shall put on the weapons
Directly, wait!—no, go rather ahead!
And I shall hasten after you and be with you directly.
Hector stood there mute. And Helen took
Softly and gently the word. O brother-in-law, o I
Bitch, who am to blame for all the mischief!
Who fills you with shuddering! O had then,
When I came into the world, a storm seized me
And hurled me over mountain and valley into the sea,
That the waves pulled me into the depths,
Before all this happened! Yet, since the gods
Once wished that I should remain alive:
Would that they had not delivered me to a man
Who is without feeling toward insult and shame!
But nothing changes him now anymore! Come then, dear one,
Now for a little while inside and sit down,
Brother-in-law, you who for the sake of me, bitch-wife,
And for Alexandros' sake endure so much,
Upon whom Zeus has burdened such manifold heavy mischief
That men will speak and sing of it
As long as the world stands.
But the great, helmet-fluttering Hector

Said: Helen, do not so kindly urge
Me to sit, I must not; for it drives me
Forth into the battle to the Trojans, who for me
Already looked longingly as I went away.

But do you urge this one on, and he himself
Shall make haste, that he me in the city
May still reach! For I go beforehand
Now into my house, in order there my dear wife
And my child still to kiss, for who knows
Whether I shall return to them again.
With that Hector turned and reached
Soon his house.

Three characters reveal themselves in this scene with startling clarity. First, Paris. We believe ourselves to be getting to know him here for the first time. He is neither cowardly nor powerless, but he is neither born nor bred for war as a trade. For him war is only a sport. Love, honor, fatherland, chariot-driving, music, artistic enjoyment, and intercourse with artists stand on the same level for his outlook. The world exists for him insofar as it just then interests him. Led away by a high-born woman amidst the laughter of both armies, he deems it most convenient to take the matter ill as an insulted prince and to shut himself in his palace. Helen, who has long known that nothing is to be accomplished with him through strong words, had brought him by flattering to return to the battle. But for that armor was required. Instead of putting on the first best weapons, Paris begins as a friend of art and connoisseur to muster his possession of such things comfortably. Each piece he views and touches. In his accustomed manner he listens to Hector's reproaches quietly and admits he is right. Then, however, he remarks how Hector has just interrupted him in the selection of the best pieces of armor. Only a moment, and he will go with him. Or no, he corrects himself: go ahead, I am with you directly.

This last turn is admirable. Paris demands that one should leave him time. And Helen, grasping that nothing is to be done here, wishes at least to procure for herself the pleasure of associating for a few minutes with someone who in her eyes is a man. They no longer call Paris by name: Hector says "this one there." Helen abandons herself to his judgment.

Regarding Hector, Homer speaks the final word only at the end of the poem, but here already he shows him as the one whose hands hold Ilion, and who claims nothing for it but the consciousness of having done his part. Paris's answer to Hector's rebuking speech makes the latter mute. However he might think of Helen deep in his breast as he wished, the woman's situation shames him and makes him mild. The way in which he excuses himself in declining politeness for not being allowed to enter and stay shows the tender goodness of his nature. In the feeling of his strength he finds it only natural that the heaviest task should fall precisely to him, similar in this to Achilles, who had not complained that he did the heaviest work. Hector has the modesty of those who achieve something. He excuses himself with wife and child. He asks for only one thing: that Helen keep "this one there" in the mood to arm himself and, while he himself is still in Troy, to join him. Hector wishes to achieve only the one thing: that it may not be said of his own brother that he did not wish to fight.

Helen, however, excites our pity. We encounter this kind of enchantment in modern French novels. Helen judges Paris just as harshly as Hector does, but she lets him have his way, just as Hector likewise does. She did not drive him into the battle with harsh words: she coaxed him into arming himself and fighting along.

Let us at this point, where Helen steps most visibly toward us, summarize her fate, as Homer carried it within himself, in full roundedness.

The most remarkable trait in her character is the living criticism of her own behavior. Combined with this is the compliance toward that which she has once recognized and accepted as her fate. Both, however, not without the admixture, dominating her being, of full enjoyment of her existence! The connection of these three elements is to us just as understandable as it is attractive. This existence appears uncommonly human to us, and the indestructible luster of royal majesty that surrounds her becomes her well.

Homer has his own way of ennobling the figures he creates. Once more we encounter Helen in his work in a position to speak of herself. In the last

canto of the Iliad she appears again. At Hector's corpse she breaks out into lamentation. With despairing resignation she wails for his loss.

> Hector! Of all brothers-in-law to me the dearest!
> Would that I, before Alexandros carried me away,
> Had rather died beforehand! Twenty years [1]
> Passed by since I came to Troy,
> But never did I hear a reproachful,
> Evil word from you! And if in the palace
> Brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law and mother-in-law—
> For the father-in-law alone was mild—
> Assailed me, you held them back,
> Softly persuading with quiet, noble words.
> Therefore, I weep for you. For in all Troy
> Is no one more good to me and no one kind
> And it shudders all they who look upon me.

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[1] Here twenty years, whereas it need be only half as many. Larger numbers always designate only in general a long time.

All of them. Helen seems not to remember her husband at all, so as to except him. Her fate is sealed. Again, one of the signs of the inner conclusion which Homer's poem finds in the twenty-fourth canto.

That Helen was the one who bore the guilt for the war is no longer mentioned. Only as Alexandros's consort and as Hector's sister-in-law does she bewail the dead man.

And despite all that, another shift! Again, years later Helen reigns in old Sparta again, whither she returned with Menelaos after Troy's destruction. Here she hospitably receives Telemachus, who is searching for his father. Indestructibly young and beautiful she sits there again, as if she had never stirred from the spot. Penelope saw in Helen's going away more of a mistake than a crime, and from the young prince, whom the queen treats kindly, she could expect only veneration.

She was radiant like a precious diamond which robbers once carried away, which has been recovered and has lost nothing of its light. Her Trojan times are by no means not to be touched upon; she speaks of them as of a great illness into which the will of the gods had once let her fall. Homer indicates in a beautiful way here that only the memory of these past things, but not sorrow over them, has remained with her. For in seeing Helen secretly throw the sorrow-dispelling remedy into the wine for Telemachus, which had once been given to her on the journey home in Egypt, we learn at the same time through this only that the remedy must have proven its sorrow-consuming power on Helen herself already earlier. On this occasion also other experiences of Helen in Troy are told by Homer, which made the capture of the city and Helen's return to her first husband possible, circumstances which were not needed as events to be reported for the plan of the Iliad, but which could be brought forward in the Odyssey as narratives from a time long past. For that we admire again in the Odyssey, that what lies behind is also occasionally interspersed here and that the first cantos of this poem, like those of the Iliad, make us acquainted with the totality of what happened as if by chance in torn-off pieces.

Thus I would have now presented the entire Homeric Helen: Zeus's daughter, who as a mortal queen concludes peacefully. Possessing from her father the gift of experiencing nothing that did not allow her every day to start a new account of existence.

Let us fly over once more with a historically observing eye the two figures of the Phrygian king's son and the Argive woman. Is it to be deemed impossible that a single poet carried the characters of this man and this woman as rounded manifestations within himself, in order to scatter them in the form of fragments over the two great poems as if in individual musical movements, which, effective in their place each time in a different context, then however also again only when lined up for themselves unite into a beautiful melody?

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And now, a few thousands of years after their first birth from Homer's spirit, Helen is entwined by Goethe into the life of the new age. The Greek

shadow-queen begins to excite new passions and to be moved by them. At Helen's name, each of us today thinks first after all of the second part of Goethe's Faust, where the queen appearing as a ghost is beguiled and beguiles for the last time. A wonderful consonance of this last hyperborean incarnation with the oldest form of the Greek woman for whom, descending from gods, kings waged war. Both conceptions of the most beautiful woman, the most ancient and the most modern, fit one another, indeed, can no longer do without one another.

Goethe performs a strange experiment with Helen. It is the continuing real Helen whom Faust embraces: a ghost whom Mephisto abducts to the upper world in order to play theater. Of the right of all poets to change the received myth, Goethe simultaneously makes use. The fateful intervention of Aphrodite he felt as something no longer gripping our current public in the theater. The working of the goddess, who intimidates, overwhelms, and befools Helen through persuasion, so that her flight with Paris receives something fateful that falls to the burden of the higher powers and not Helen, appeared to Goethe too mechanical: he lets Helen's seduction take its origin neither from the will of the goddess nor from the wooing of Paris, but turns things so that Paris as a beautiful youth is seduced by the experienced woman. In the magical spectacle which Faust provides for the emperor and the court with the help of genuine ghosts, Paris while slumbering is kissed by Helen like Endymion by Diana. And so beside Faust later Helen also appears with the divine unconcern of a woman to whom beauty and highest rank allow, like to the goddesses themselves when they find pleasure in mortals, to descend to them. To whom no one reckons up the ever-newly beginning adventures, so that in the later thing the earlier thing might even be thought of.

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Helen belongs to the immortal figures in the realm of poetry. Who knows which poet after thousands of years will once again newly animate her.

Fourth Book

The poet has, in the first three cantos, placed three groups of the persons acting in the great drama whose deeds and thoughts we are to judge. At the same time, the foreboding of what is to happen has been impressed upon us.

Achilles' re-entry is presupposed as a certainty, and yet again presented so much as an impossibility that the tension arises which Homer intends to evoke. Only the utmost necessity can drive the Greeks to humiliate themselves before Achilles. The task is to show the approach of this moment. Homer now proceeds by leading the bravest champions of the Greeks into battle and endowing each with such strength that for moments it gains the appearance that the man capable of replacing Achilles has been found. Nevertheless, this must afterward never be the case. Up to the hour when Agamemnon stands before Achilles as a suppliant, events must escalate to the point that we feel this step was unavoidable.

To bring about this inner compulsion, Homer possesses a—the word must be used again and again—wonderful art, and it requires little scenting power to demonstrate the intention of the poet as well as the means employed in detail. We notice how Homer, even without letting him intervene, always lets Achilles play along invisibly as the driving main character. He keeps the memory of him and of the injustice done to him awake.

Individual, apparently interspersed, but in their place highly effective verses serve this purpose, until then, toward the middle of the Iliad, what Achilles says and does or does not do alone governs the progress of the poem. Homer presents Achilles' fate at the end of the poem as a completed one. One might think the poem breaks off in the midst of the facts and that Achilles' death must still be reported. A similar demand, however, could be raised for many poetic works. Goethe's Iphigenia and Tasso break off in the same way. The conclusion of a poetic development of character occurs when the acting persons have experienced the decisive highest intensification of their inner existence. What they then further experience in terms of actual facts is, artistically considered, indifferent. Homer, however, has partly indicated, partly foretold in the course of the Iliad what the future contains. Even before Hector's fall, we are already as accurately informed

of the course things will take after his death as we had previously known of Hector's death itself.

The death of Hector, not that of Achilles or the fall of the city, is the external conclusion of the Iliad. The entire architecture of the poem demands this event, which includes the downfall of Achilles and Troy, as a keystone, so to speak.

If we take as Homer's task, which he set for himself as a poet (just as Goethe pursued a fixed plan in Faust), to relate what occurred up to the death of Hector, various paths to this goal are conceivable. The poet could treat things so that what happened was represented only from the side of the Greeks and of the Greek interest. Much like a German poet or historian who undertook to describe the Seven Years' War would proceed solely from the person of Frederick and the fates of his army and his generals, or at least preferably from the interest of Prussia. Or like a painter who, even if he had to represent Frederick's defeats, would always bring him and his people into the foreground as the main characters. Or like the poet of the Nibelungen always views both the initial fates of Siegfried and the downfall of the heroes at Attila's court from the side of the Burgundians.

Another, broader, more shifting arrangement of the Nibelungen would be conceivable, so that at the beginning things were also conceived and told from the Brunhildian side and, during the last battles of Attila, the Hunnish interest formed more the starting point of the report and a stronger juxtaposition of national standpoints had taken place. To be sure, the poet of the Nibelungen, by introducing Rüdiger and Dietrich von Bern as combatants in Attila's service, undertook to create a contrast of this kind, yet even these two heroes are Germans, and the tragedy of their appearances lies in the fact that they are so. In spite of these two mighty figures, Attila's cause in the Nibelungen does not, in terms of breadth, form a mass such as it does in the Walthariuslied, which in this respect, according to the composition, is more artistic. Homer could have been content to exploit the Trojan things and people as the merely distant background of what happens among the Greeks. He could also have restricted himself to

the Greeks in the finer characterization of the fellow-fighting heroes. But his gaze encompasses more. Without taking anything from the Greeks' significance, he assigns Ilion a role of its own. He lets the national contrast emerge into the depths of the way of thinking and acting. Homer has gone so far here that the thought could arise that he stood rather on the side of Hector and Andromache. For as far as vividness in the sense of modern realism is concerned, Hector receives clearer illumination than Achilles, to whom the more grandly governing, but not in such sharply drawn outlines recognizable spiritual element gives precedence. Through this consistently carried out doubling of the standpoint, Homer gains the advantage of being allowed to change the scene. Leaping from one side to the other, he transports us now into the sphere of the Greek, now into that of the Trojan existence, so that the Greeks are at one time the opponents of the Trojans, the latter then again those of the Greeks. Just now we were looking up toward the walls of the city around which the fight is waged, from the Greek camp, and now we look down from Ilion's height across to the Greeks. Trojans and Greeks stand far or near to us, depending on how the poet wishes to place us.

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And so we wish to admire the art with which, also in the application of the external poetic technique, the fate of the Greeks is bound to that of Achilles, while that of the Trojans attaches itself to that of another single man, for whom everything depends on Achilles remaining far from the fight. For as long as Achilles is angry, Hector is stronger than all the Greeks; as soon as Achilles returns to the fight, Hector sinks and with him Ilion. Hector's death signifies the fall of the city. And now we admire again how it must be Hector who, by slaying Patroclus, effects Achilles' return to the fight and brings about his and his people's ruin. This chain of events already shows us how the Trojan element subordinates itself to the Greek and serves to drive the Greek affairs toward the decision, toward the blossoming of which the poet works. For, I return to this, only Hector's death makes the conclusion of the Iliad possible: the reconciliation of the moral madness of Achilles through his self-conquest toward the father of Hector. Achilles' ascent to the purest human feeling is of higher significance

than the downfall of Hector, who sacrifices himself under the influence of noble fulfillment of duty for honor and fatherland. We love and admire Hector, but he offers no problem like Achilles. Interpretations carried into a work of art have something foolish about them, ultimately running out to zero. To fail to recognize its content, however, would be a reproach. Homer's plan contains an idea like that of Tasso by Goethe, or Iphigenia or Nathan. Moral problems open up before us in these poems like flowers opening from buds into ever greater splendor of color and beauty of line. It would bring no advantage to be allowed to deny this spiritual structure to the oldest poetic work that humanity brought forth.

But with the doubling of the standpoint Homer has not yet accomplished everything of which his inventive spirit was capable. He requires a third view, which can only be this one: to represent the gaze of a higher power down upon Greeks and Trojans at the same time.

Let us for once yield to the suspicion that the Nibelungen had been composed when Wodan's heaven was still believed in. Let us assume above the battle of the Hunns and Burgundians yet a strife of the German gods who, surpassing the mortals infinitely in strength, yet mixed like mortals in their errors. What an increase in the deployment of power and in events could have been gained there at the downfall of King Gunther and his brothers! I have already mentioned earlier how great the difference between the Iliad and the Nibelungen is through the absence of the superterrestrial, heavenly element. Only rarely does the fairy-tale-like reach into the poem. The conquest of the dragon and the invulnerability of Siegfried. The cap of invisibility which allows the king to overpower Brunhild. On the bank of the Danube the prophesying women who announce the downfall to Hagen. From then on, nothing more. This is the reason why no sunlight falls into the poem, which is too uniformly resounded with the din of weapons. More fortunately, Homer has vaulted his cheerful heaven of gods uniformly over Trojans and Greeks and introduced us into the intimacy of the golden cloud-palaces inhabiting immortals. For these beings, at once tangible and intangible, now evaporating like clouds, now stamped into abrupt humanity, he creates a third scene of events to which he easily transports us upward as

the contrasts demand, so that Ilion and the Greek camp lie equally near and far beneath us. Viewed from Olympus, the wildest battles of heroes look like a game.

One might venture the comparison that the Iliad were a fabric knotted together from, let us say, red, green, and golden threads, with which the poet incessantly formed new patterns that in the course of the poem shaped themselves ever more simply and ever more grandly.

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The greatest thing would now be in Homer's work that we always considered the thread we were just watching to be the most noble; so that its entanglements seemed to govern those of the other threads, and yet, as soon as we took into consideration the merging of all three colors, they always made out an artistically drawn, harmoniously working mesh. How could we think of chance at this sight? In this the artistically governing spirit reveals itself immediately, that no color outdoes the other, but each, when it has reached its main effect, sinks in the fabric as it were for some time, so that the others assert themselves with equal right of luster. While an incessant interruption of the one element by the other takes place, the quiet progress of the entire composition is not disturbed. I would know of no place in the Iliad where in this respect a too-much or too-little emerged. [1]

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1 Excepting the sixth canto, where the latter is the case.

If it apparently behaves so at a few points, we easily restore the harmony or demonstrate the possibility of a correction. The poet always holds fast to the main interest, but never is our curiosity excited without a tension of a moral kind lying at the base. Every new canto brings news that surprises and appears necessary upon looking back. Never is an unnecessary figure introduced or a secondary person drawn too sharply. Never do broad passages appear in the narrative whose restriction seemed feasible to us. Never does one of the main persons claim our participation for too long. And always, what might seem dispensable as an episode would leave a gap as soon as one thought it away.

I point out still some fine means peculiar to Homer to bring figures before the imagination.

When Agamemnon sends off the heralds to fetch Briseis from Achilles' tents, he calls them both by name: Talthybius and Eurybates.

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In the second canto Odysseus sets out to call the assembly of the people; a herald accompanies him who has nothing to do but once to pick up for him the cloak that had fallen down. This one too receives his name. (Coincidentally he is again named Eurybates.)

In the third canto, when Helen hurries to the wall of the city, two handmaidens accompany her: Athra and Clymene. And so similar cases.

Why does the poet endow figures who have no influence on the development of things with names in these places? Because thereby a reinforcement of existence is gained for the main persons. Agamemnon, Odysseus, and Helen stand more vividly before us in the company of named persons.

These mere name-bearers, who have nothing to do in the higher sense, even receive the stamp of personalities through constant reappearance in the course of the poem. As in the life of the day subaltern people whom one often meets and whose repeated services and manual tasks we value gain substance through their always-being-on-hand, in Homer the mere name lends the appearance of continuous activity and more living significance. In the second canto, Agamemnon may again on some occasion require a herald: Talthybius enters there already as a necessary man. In the third canto we find him again and so on until the last. Idaeus, Priam's charioteer, likewise returns until the end of the poem after he first appeared in the third canto. In the ninth canto we find the Eurybates of Odysseus anew. In the Odyssey he then acts even more broadly. They come as old acquaintances. They awake trust. They receive like familiar household goods the shimmer of spiritual substance.

We encounter this artifice also in Shakespeare and Goethe, who lend individuality to insignificant figures through names and few words. Nothing

is to remain unliving, nothing an empty word. A sound is transformed into a concept. Only the overview of all cantos made that possible.

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This effort for personal existence corresponds to the careful preparation of events. If Homer breaks off in the narrative, he calculates this as a means to work upon the imagination. If there were here only an accidental clashing of individual parts that arose during the editing together of the cantos, then an equally accidental thing would also correspond to the occurrence of important events. But they never come suddenly. —

Homer opens the fourth canto with a scene that gives new tidings of the constitutional life of the Olympians.

The fight between Paris and Menelaus had been ended by the intervention of Aphrodite in a way that allowed the Greeks to demand Helen as the prize of victory. The Trojans, astonished at the disappearance of the combatant provided by them, come to no decision. The armies face each other, ready for battle and eager for battle. There now Homer lets the role fall to the gods to effect a treacherous act on the part of the Trojans which has the fray as a necessary consequence. The task of the heavenly powers is to let the Trojans become guilty of a breach of faith and to punish them for it.

Sitting on the golden floor of the heavenly vault, the immortals feast and are zealously served by Hebe. They pledge one another and look down upon Ilion. They hold counsel. Zeus cherishes the hope that it could yet come to the delivery of Helen and to the continued existence of the city, thus to the peaceful departure of the Greeks. Foreknowing that Hera would rise against him, he prefers to challenge her with an indirectly ironic address. This way of making fun of the gods in the consciousness that the last word belongs to him anyway, Zeus allows himself often. “Two goddesses,” he begins, “are for Menelaus. They have placed themselves somewhat apart and look down with pleasure on what happens below. That one (Paris) Aphrodite has just saved from downfall. But Menelaus has conquered. What is to happen now? Shall we let the murdering begin again?

If no one had anything against it, the city of Priam might continue to exist as before, and Menelaus lead Helen back to Argos."

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The motion for mediation of an experienced man who belongs to all parties equally. Zeus speaks like the president of a political assembly which he seeks to guide over to harmless resolutions. To whom the last result of the vote, moreover, is almost indifferent.

Hera and Athena give signs of unrest. They are indeed sitting together and have evil against Troy in mind. Athena speaks not a word. With Hera, however, the rage is stronger than the caution.

"What does this mean?" she cries. "Shall all the trouble and hardship I have had been in vain? — The sweat I sweat from exertion, and also my horses, which I worked to exhaustion in inciting the people against Priam and his children? Do what you will. But all the gods will not be in agreement with you."

For the judgment both of the speeches that fall here and of the state of mind of those involved, the knowledge is again lacking how far the language applied by the poet of his time lowered itself to the language of the day. We do not know the conversational accent of the Homeric world. But we receive the impression that the poet here and elsewhere where he lets the gods negotiate among themselves wishes to avoid the majesty of speech which his human heroes rarely lack. This "the sweat I sweat," these differences of the various degrees of rage, wrath, resentment, anger, or only grumbling, show Homer's endeavor to nuance sharply. He certainly knew exactly what effect he would produce. The full enjoyment of these scenes of gods perhaps only those had who heard them from his mouth. As it is claimed, only he fully understood Dickens' novels who heard them read aloud by him.

Zeus snaps at Hera. "What then have Priam and his children done to you, terrible woman, that nothing can soothe your rage against them? Why must Ilion absolutely go to ruin? You would, if you came through the gates and fortifications into the city, eat Priam and the children of Priam with hide

and hair and the remaining Trojans thereto, before your wrath was satiated. But do what you will. This bickering between us two shall for all the future now have an end."

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"But to come to something else," he continues, "mark for yourself the following. Should it also once be in my mind to bring a city to ruin, and were it precisely one whose inhabitants were particularly dear to you: do you then not seek to hold me back, but let me also have my will. What I now grant you, in that I yield to you, but unwillingly! For of all cities under the sun and the starry heaven, so far as men inhabit cities, the holy Ilion and Priam and his people are venerable to me. Never has my altar there lacked the well-measured sacrifice, drink offering as well as steam of fat. This honor has fallen to our lot."

Zeus thus gives in. The city is sacrificed to Hera. We might say: bartered away to her. Hera uses the advantages immediately, which on the part of her spouse are after all always only an offer at first. She is willing to pay the highest price.

"Three cities," she replies, "are dearest to me: Argos, Sparta, and Mycenae: destroy all three of them if you have something against them. For none of them will I stand up or withhold them from you. For even if I wanted to cry out against it or prevent you from destroying them, all effort would indeed be in vain, since you are the stronger. But now let my trouble here not have been an unnecessary one. I too am a god! By my birth I come from the same place whence you come!"

"And further, I am the eldest of Cronos' children and stand closest to you as relative and wife. You, however, have to command all the immortals. Let us both therefore yield to each other: I to you, you to me. The other gods will be in agreement. Instruct Athena to go to the battlefield and to effect that the Trojans break the sworn armistice."

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The father of men and gods is not opposed to this and calls to Athene: "Make haste now to the Trojans and Achaeans and seek to bring it about

that the Trojans are the first to violate the truce."

We notice that things happen as naturally as in a modern salon, as if the talk were of hares and partridges. Nowhere, where he allows humans to appear, does Homer depict earthly circumstances with such comfort and lack of self-consciousness as he does here the divine ones. He revels in the representation of high society. At the same time, however, we now notice for this and other passages of the Iliad: from the moment the gods are no longer among themselves, his tone changes. Athene goes to the battlefield. She simplifies herself. She towers upward. She has suddenly transformed into an immense, threatening figure, which like a descending star, drifts downward through the air.

The sending of the deceitful dream had been the first thing Zeus had done against the Greeks: now, then, the second treachery.

> Thus speaking he urged on Athene,
> (Who long since had desired nothing else,)
> To hasten down from the peaks of Olympos.
> Like a star that sinks down from heaven, she came!
> Which terrifies the sailors or an army,
> Shining and with sparks that spray from it.
> Like unto this Pallas Athene hastened to earth
> And sprang into the midst of it, and a shudder ran through
> Trojans and Greeks alike, whoever looked upon it.
> Then one spoke to another, who stood nearest him:
> Now there will be combat and murder and raging battle,
> Or friendship and peace between the peoples,
> As is now the will of Zeus, who directs the battles.
> So one spoke to another, who stood nearest him.

How, with this magnificent transition, is the natural relationship established between humans and gods, to whom we look up again as the almighty administrators of fate.

Let us also remember how that which Athene now begins is after all only an attempt to entice the Trojans into a breach of the sworn conditions. It

would still have lain in the hands of mortals to remain firm. Athene, however, knows what she has to do.

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She assumes the form of one of the Trojan warriors and seeks out Pandaros, the best archer among the Trojan auxiliary peoples. Him she persuades to fire an arrow at Menelaos. With a long narrative the goddess seeks to bring Pandaros to that point. And, to heighten our expectation as to whether he will yield to her and what will happen after he allows himself to be persuaded, Homer tells, before Pandaros uses the bow, the history of this bow, and then depicts how the treacherous shot was made.

> Thus Athene, and so directed the mind
> Of the thoughtless one. And he, reaching for
> The well-polished bow of the horn of the wild ibex,
> — Which he himself once shot from the rock
> Through the breast, in ambush, hitting it from the front,
> So that it fell backward down into the rocks,
> Whose horns were a full sixteen hands wide,
> And these horns the bow-maker joined
> Firmly together, polished them and placed
> Golden ferris around — this bow
> Pandaros took carefully from its case, braced it
> Against the ground and strung it. But his noble friends
> Covered him with their shields in front,
> Before he fired the arrow, so that the Achaeans
> Should not storm against him before he had
> Surely hit Menelaos. But now he took the lid
> From the quiver, drew out an unused,
> Well-feathered arrow, the bringer
> Of black pains, then placed the sharpened
> Missile upon the string at the right spot,
> Called silently upon Apollo, the master of the bow,
> In prayer, promising him a rich sacrifice,
> Drew, firmly grasping the middle of the bow,
> Now the string to his breast and the arrow’s

Tip to the bow, and when he had drawn it
Almost into a circle, it suddenly rang out,
And the string sounded as if it were crying,
And the sharp-pointed missile flew off,
Greedy to bore itself into the flesh of the enemy.
Yet the immortal gods, o Menelaos,
Had not forgotten you, and before all

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Not the daughter of Zeus, the protectress of heroes!
Standing before him she warded off the missile
As a mother wards off a fly from a sleeping child,
Guiding it there, where the golden bands
Of the belt held the double breastplate together.
There the arrow struck and, piercing the belt, cut
Through the breastplate, until at last it entered the flesh,
And the dark blood leaped forth from the wound.

One might think the poet, as an old archer, had used the opportunity to bring forward his experiences.

Let us notice how Homer does not describe what happened as a fact, but allows it to occur. Every moment from the first grasping of the bow until the wounding of Menelaos necessitates a progress in the action. Homer places us where the arrow moves toward the decisive goal. From verse to verse we feel: here is the center, here the decisive moment. We feel the same with Shakespeare, whereas Dante's poems lack this dramatic interest that fills the moment, and we are dominated more by the richness and sharpness of his visions. Dickens' novels, on the other hand, impart this feeling of moving-along in the highest degree. Of Goethe's works, Hermann and Dorothea, in which he also proceeded most as a consciously shaping artist.

How brilliant was the transition with which Homer transposed us from the Olympian circle into the Trojan one, and how naturally, after Menelaos has been hit by Pandaros' arrow, he leads us over into the Greek one.

For the first time, I note further, Homer here uses the form of personal address:

> But of you, o Menelaos, the blessed,
> The immortal gods had not forgotten!

A manner in which he distinguishes Menelaos even more often. He uses it in the Iliad and Odyssey with only a few persons. One of the inconspicuous means again with which he stamps individual figures, as if he wished to favor them above the others.

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From now on we see things develop further from the Greek side. What has gone before was only the—as Homer loves—twice-starting introduction to that which forms the actual content of our canto. The beginning of the battle along the whole line is now to be described, for which Pandaros' shot had given the signal.

At this point Homer allows Agamemnon to step closer to us humanly for the first time.

The complicated character of the king, unattractive in the majority of its components, revealed itself slowly in the first cantos. Coldness, calculation, and self-interest dominate. It is strange how, without a glimmer of imitation, the two German poems in which kings appear, the Waltharius-Lay and the Nibelungen, characterize them in a similar way. King Gunther in both poems shares the uncomfortable egoism with Agamemnon.

Now, however, Homer shows the king from the purely human side. A shudder runs through Agamemnon as he sees his brother's blood flow. Outraged by the cowardice of Paris and the breach of the truce, he prophesies the downfall of the Trojans. From now on his figure dominates the fourth canto.

Agamemnon is the first of the heroes whom Homer allows to appear, to see if their bravery might not perhaps replace that of Achilles. We see his tall figure before us. Priam first had pointed him out when he demanded information from Helen as to who this ruler, towering above all others,

might be. At the beginning of the second canto already Agamemnon had to arm himself before our eyes; we have a feeling of his mighty presence. While the Trojans press forward from one side, Menelaos is being bandaged in the midst of the throng. Agamemnon, however, hurries through the army to urge the princes individually to battle, and in such a manner that he, as such exhortations are wont to sound among Trojans and Greeks, passionately and unjustly raises the reproach of indolence or cowardice.

Homer allows the king to confront Idomeneus, the two Ajaxes, Nestor, Menestheus, Odysseus, and Diomedes in this way. The violent words exchanged therein are characteristic of both parties. A vivid feeling of the situation permeates us, which is further heightened by one of those similes in which Homer so likes to compare moving masses of people with the waves of the sea:

> As on the far-echoing shore of the sea
> Wave upon wave the pressing west wind drives on,
> Far out from the coast the billow rises,
> And then, when it has reached the solid land,
> It breaks over, leaning forward as it bows,
> Thundering loudly, and around the promontory
> Sprays salty foam high over the rocks:
> So hurried, rank pressed upon rank,
> Now the hosts of the Danaans into the battle,
> Ever the princes ahead with loud command.

Earlier it had been said, only to be repeated now with greater emphasis, how the Greeks move into battle in silent discipline, the Trojans with confused clamor. Let us notice how these comparisons with the sea run through the Iliad, but in detail always differ from one another. Homer’s store of words to characterize the noise of the waves, their movement, the nature of the shore, the effects of the wind’s influence, is great. We are not able in every instance to know which nautical vision the expressions correspond to. We often translate by guesswork. Nevertheless, these

representations, which perhaps had their full content only in Homer's time, retain enough effect even today.

Characteristic of the Homeric similes is that, carried out more broadly, they give the imagination impressions that have a longer duration. In the fourth canto the fall of a mortally struck hero is compared with that of a felled poplar,

> Which at the moist edge of the meadow ground
> Had shot up and stood there with smooth bark,
> Bearing thick branches only at the top,

> And which a man, who builds wagons, with a sharp
> Axe struck to the ground, in order to take from it
> The round-curved rim of the wagon seat.
> And at the water's high-lying bank
> It lies drying there.

Notice the way this comparison concludes. It was not so much the striking down of the tree that mattered to the poet as the helpless lying there of the felled trunk. One sees the axe fly, the poplar tremble and break. The sight, indeed the history of this tree, dominates us as long as the sinking down of mortally struck warriors continues to be told at this point of the canto. Homer thereby gives the battle a landscape background, an art whose effect we shall often point to throughout the entire Iliad. Remarkable throughout is Homer's power to give sensory duration to visions. When it is described how Apollo from the walls of Ilion calls out encouragement to the Trojans, while Athene, wandering through the ranks of the Greeks, fires up the laggards, the down-thundering shouting of the god penetrates, as it were, into Athene's calling. In the battle for the ships we shall hear overwhelming shouting in an even more magnificent manner. This too we observe: that Homer takes up similes, which he initially gives as it were in a weaker dose, later more expanded and with a weightier accent.

I know of no passage in the fourth canto that does not testify to an increasing power of expression. The verses concluding it grant, in a peculiar

turn, an overview of the battle in which both sides fight with equal bravery:

> Had Pallas Athene encountered
> A man, of bronze and invulnerable,
> Taken him by the hand and, lightly
> Warding off the missiles, guided him through the fight:
> Truly, he would not have been able to find fault there
> With what was done on that day, when
> So many Trojans and Danaans, falling forward,
> Lay dead together in the dust.

The idea of the Dantean passage through Hell is already contained in these verses. By the hand of his leader Virgil, Dante is not affected by the sufferings which are endured before his eyes and which he judges historically.

And further: it was reminded above how Homer never fails to mention at the right time that Achilles stays far from the battlefield. Apollo's call to the Trojans to hold out and advance fearlessly must serve this:

> Do not yield the field to the Achaeans! Go forward!
> Neither of stone nor of iron are they: the bronze cuts
> Into their flesh just as into yours! And
> Achilleus is not in the fight! For he sits
> Quietly by the ships, gnawing at his wrath!

Here now, however, something important.

In Apollo's words lies the admission that the Trojans would indeed be justified in harboring fear if Achilles participated in the fight. In ourselves, however, we state at the same time a shift of feeling toward Achilles. He had been insulted and had a right to be angry: from the moment, however, where the battle has begun without it also driving him irresistibly into it, he loses much of our sympathy. Blind passion indicates overflowing strength, cold restraint repels. Here Achilles' guilt begins. He might, after the victory had been won through his strength, contemptuously reject the thanks of the Greeks: but be there he had to! And now we notice what Homer does: now,

when this shift to Achilles' disadvantage takes place within us, he lets a heroic figure enter fresh, with whom the hope rises that the Greeks will succeed in throwing down the Trojans even without Achilles' assistance. A new interest takes hold of us. We see appearing beside Achilles a youthful combatant who seems to want to reach his height. And not only toward Achilles, but also toward Hector he raises himself up. We expect what the result of the wrestling of these two with one another will be. The stepping-in of Diomedes is one of the ingenious artistic means of the poet to multiply the interest incessantly and yet to strengthen the unity of his work. The main function of the fourth canto is to prepare this insertion of a figure of the first rank into the poem.

Hector too has a hero beside him who almost reaches up to him. Aeneas, where he enters into action, belongs to the unconquerable, but is kept in the background by the fact that no shift of a higher sort links the fates of Troy to his existence. The same role has been assigned to Diomedes, in all else a reflection of Achilles. Diomedes stands within the development of things, but also outside of them. He has something episodic about him. We see in Goethe's Egmont Alba's son recede in a similar way, and also in Schiller's Wallenstein Max for this reason intervene more passively than actively. The tragic does not lie in Max Piccolomini's character, but only in the position which the poet assigns to him. Had Homer wanted to involve Diomedes in things as strongly as the other heroes of the first rank whom the Iliad harbors beside him, Achilles would have been impaired by him. And no poetically satisfying conclusion would have been found for him. Diomedes' lot was to be to reach home again fresh and uninjured.

The way Homer introduces him now is glorious. There, where in the second canto the military force of the Greeks is enumerated, we found Diomedes listed simply as being present. Of the excellence of his team there was as yet no talk at the inspection of horses there. In the assembly of princes he was not named. Among those whom Helen had to designate by name for the old king, he figured just as little. Only in the fourth canto does he suddenly step close before us. Diomedes belongs to the princes whom Agamemnon spurs to battle by attacking them with reproaches. We already

know how Homer draws the characters who matter to him so that their first action provides as it were a prelude to all that follows. Diomedes is to shine through the possession of that which we miss in Achilles. If anything allowed the unjust treatment that Achilles received from Agamemnon not to appear entirely undeserved, it was his immoderately haughty behavior toward him who represented the supreme authority and who at the same time was the older man.

The painful memory of this first encounter never leaves us. A demonic self-consciousness springs out from it, the frightening effect of which remains. It is as if Homer had composed the first entrance of Diomedes with regard to this quality of Achilles. Diomedes restrains himself. Agamemnon, on his circuit through the army, finds him and his charioteer about to drive off, but not yet in motion. He showers them, as negligent and laggard, with reproaches. Diomedes replies nothing, while Sthenelos in his stead rejects the king's words. Friendly, but briefly, Diomedes commands him to silence. The king has a right to exhort everyone now to battle, since for him everything is at stake. This sense of tact in the midst of difficult situations makes Diomedes in the following cantos the person who, with word and deed, almost gives the deciding factor, until the poet, shortly before the re-entry of Achilles, then indeed removes him by having Paris render him unfit for battle by a shot in the heel. Only in the twenty-third canto may he appear again, to receive the prize from Achilles' hands at the games in honor of Patroclus. The peculiarly heroic nature of Diomedes could give rise to the thought that the parts of the Iliad concerning him were fragments of a special poem dedicated to him. In this assumption it is forgotten how within the character of Diomedes those qualities granting a conflict, thus indeed necessitating his own dedicated epic, do not lie, and that without the silent contrast to Achilles he would lose the firm outlines that distinguish him. How sharply drawn stands Marquis Posa before us, acting so energetically in his place beside Carlos, Alba, and Philip: without these contrasts, however, little would remain of the interest he inspires in us, and the radiant illumination he gains in the decisive scenes would transform into an indifferent halo.

It was a happy thought of Homer to let Diomedes come and disappear as he does, but this brilliant light falls on him, as with Posa and Max, only through the episodic nature of his career. —

The composition of the fourth canto corresponds to that of the preceding cantos in that it falls into several acts, the last of which breaks off. In the third canto the battlefield before Troy provided the scene three times, the inner city twice. And indeed, with this change of location, we are led further from one scene to another in increasing suspense. The artistically thought-out structure could be recognized. No less in the fourth canto.

The bearer of the entire action is Athene, whose passionate interest for the cause of the Greeks governs the course of things. By Homer allowing the goddess to enter now here, now there, it becomes possible for him to transport us to different places of the great battle and to conclude with that beautiful thought that Athene leads us as a guide through the throng of the combatants. We rise from the sight of the detail to the contemplation of the two armies as historically grounded masses. This fiction of a spectator who, as an uninvolved stranger, represents the objective contemplation of the events, has something modern about it. We think of a reporter who has only to see and to report. We shall meet him again in an even more pregnant configuration in one of the later cantos.

Fifth Book

Athene causes Diomedes, at the beginning of the fifth canto, to become invincible through her blessing of his weapons. Homer’s intention is to immediately present Diomedes as one who almost reached Achilles in strength. We nevertheless observe a progression in his deeds, and connected therewith, the elaboration of his character. True, what we receive occasionally appears only loosely joined together; the more we consider it, however, the more clearly the conscious structure of the canto emerges from these casualties.

The poet begins as if, after the conclusion of the preceding canto, he had paused for only a few moments to draw breath:

> Then Athene gave to Diomedes
> Strength and battle-lust, so that he before all
> Greeks might be visible and win glory.
> Helm and shield kindled like fire.
> Like the Dog Star, which has the most radiance,
> When, having bathed at night, it rises from the sea:
> So, shining like fire about shoulders and head,
> She thrust him into the throng where the press was strongest.

Let us observe how the Ocean in our imagination becomes part of the background for the coming events.

Now the first two victims of Diomedes. A family drama, beginning like a fairy tale:

> Dares, a wealthy, worthy man in Troy,
> Priest of Hephaistos, had two sons: Phegeus
> And Idaios, both skilled in strife.
> These now, fighting together, ventured forward.
> Both in a chariot, as Diomedes was on foot,
> They came pressing forward close at hand.
> Phegeus had the first cast; his spear
> Flew over Diomedes' left shoulder.
> But now Diomedes threw, and his lance
> Whizzed not fruitlessly; he hit Phegeus
> Right on the breast: then he tumbles down from the chariot.
> But Idaios, leaping down from the vehicle,
> Left the chariot alone and dared not
> Attend to his fallen brother.
> And then death would have been destined for him too,
> Had Hephaistos not with darkness
> Enveloped him, so that the poor, aged
> Father might not remain entirely disconsolate and lonely.

But Diomedes let his people
Lead the team away to the ships.
        But the Trojans, when they saw Dares' sons,
The one slain and the other chased away,
Felt their hearts tremble. —

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What tragedy! And stepping in so quite incidentally. Told so intimately, as if it were an observed experience. Now Athene leads Ares away from the battlefield and the raging of the Greek princes among the Trojans begins, introduced by the fact that the Trojans' "hearts tremble."

Encountering step by step the wealth of moving images opening up from an inexhaustible store, we understand the effect of the Iliad from a new side. Let us imagine a public recitation of the poem: what a change of mood dwells within this sequence of scenes which, without becoming weaker, succeed one another. Voss allows a too uniformly sounding language to prevail here, in which the accent of the immediate sounds of nature does not stand out clearly enough. Voss's translation suffers from the fact that it sometimes sounds too cultivated and thereby distances the things from us. The reason for this apparent deficiency, however, lies in the fact that Voss's tone, applied by too many successors, has lost its initial charm for our ear today. Later, when in the course of centuries, the imitators will have submerged, this loss must be recovered by the original euphony newly sounding forth from his verses.

In Homer's twenty-four cantos, the continuous repetition of combat and defeat and the plundering of corpses would be intolerable, if every single case had not been made a special one by the poet through his describing the fatal wounds often with the detail of a surgeon and through his interrupting the narrative with comparisons to which he lends such strong dramatic interest that they become main matters. I have already spoken of this, but will return to it often. [1]

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[1] Repetitions of this kind are a matter of course.

After the encounter with the sons of Dares, the poet lets Diomedes submerge for a time. Athene, as we saw, leads her brother Ares away from the battle. Ares, however, does not hurry away to Olympus, but settles down on the bank of the Skamandros. Idomeneus thereupon kills Phästos, Menelaos kills Skamandrios, Meriones kills Phereklos, the son of Harmonides, “who knew how to fashion all artistic things with his hands” and who once built the ships for Paris. Here for the first time Paris is pointed to as a patron of artists. Let it not be forgotten that I anticipated the passages concerning shipbuilding. Homer, when main matters are approaching, likes to give a few hints first. The battle continues. Name upon name: Meges pierces Pedäos, Eurypylos pierces Hypsenor; Diomedes, however, is sowing destruction now here now there, so that one knows not where he belongs:

> Thus they fought. But Diomedes was
> Among the Trojans now, now among the Greeks,
> No one knew to which he belonged.
> Like the stream that, filled to the brim
> By winter floods, tears the dikes—
> For the dikes do not hold it back
> Nor the fences of the fields: too suddenly
> The rain fell in showers down from heaven,
> And now the toilsome works of men sink
> Down beneath it—so tumbled the Trojans’
> Mighty ranks, which the single man
> Shattered, as many as they were.

Let us observe what makes this comparison peculiar. It affords us not only an image, but leads us at the same time into events with their own inner turn. This was already pointed out in the case of the poplar lying at the edge of the swamp.

Homer does not merely say:

> And like a river, swollen by autumnal rains,
> Tears dikes and weirs, so Diomedes stormed

Across the battlefield,

which would still be a splendid, meaningful, and vivid image. As we have the few verses before us here, on the other hand, Homer unfolds therein a self-contained occurrence. It is the end of winter. It rains and rains.

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The river swells. The dikes no longer hold. It breaks through them. Now it throws down the fences as well. It floods fields and gardens which industrious men planted. Beginning, catastrophe, and consequences. Our sympathy is excited, we forget Trojans and Greeks: we see human labor perish! In a few moments this is forced convincingly alive into our soul. And when our thoughts are then just as suddenly snatched back to the battlefield, they feel, as if refreshed by a bath, with double sharpness what further occurs there. [1]

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[1]) In Goethe's Achilleis we read the following comparison:

— — — Then divine Hera snatched
Herself quickly up from her seat and stood, as a mountain stands in the sea,
Whose sublime peaks the storms of the ether illuminate,
Angrily she spoke and high: —

This image remains an addition which does not interrupt the sensation and has only decorative value. Were we to expand it in the manner of specifically Homeric simile treatment, something like the following might be formed, in the sense of the natural events of the Greek sea:

And like the eternal sea, which in the quiet radiance of day
Lies still, suddenly excited through the power of the hidden god of the depth,
In an instant rises to mighty vortices—
And from the raging flood emerges a mountainous block of rock,
Which Neptune's mighty hand raises up from the bottom,
High into the air: now it stands with a radiantly shining peak,
Which the clouds billow around—so stood the mighty goddess—

Had Goethe written thus, however, the attention would have been diverted from the course of the narrative for a few moments by the interest excited by the rising of the mountain as an event in itself, and only brought back to it by Hera's subsequent speech. Goethe would have committed the technical error of having unnecessarily interrupted and disturbed a situation in which no violence dwells, and the simpler comparison in its merely ornamental position was correctly chosen. Homer, on the other hand, in the fifth canto of the Iliad, where the mightiest events storm our imagination, uses his similes in another sense.

Goethe uses only a few comparisons in the Achilleis altogether. One among them, where he compares the working Myrmidons to ants, he fashions apparently more in the sense of Homer, but even this image does not have its own movement that would divert the thoughts. I have also found things related hereto only rarely in Goethe's other poetic works.

One more remark. Homer would perhaps only have applied Goethe's comparison of Hera with a mountain where he brought gods and men into contact, but not in the intimate intercourse of the Olympians among themselves. On the other hand, read how Goethe introduces Aphrodite in the Achilleis. Not Homeric, but certainly felt in the spirit of Homer.

Most Homeric in form, indeed intentionally kept in the manner of Homer, appears the comparison with which Goethe introduces the seventh canto of Hermann and Dorothea:

> As the wandering man, who before the sinking of the sun
> Caught it once more in his eye, the fast-vanishing one,
> Then in the dark thicket and on the side of the rock
> Sees its image hovering; wherever he turns his gaze,
> It hastens before him and shines and wavers in glorious colors:
> So the lovely form of the girl moved gently
> Past Hermann, and seemed to follow the path into the grain.

By Homer, had he wished to bring this simile to its fullest unfolding, the look into the sinking sun would have been made an event in itself, which with its own turn and even without having to serve as a comparison, formed

something self-contained. I will not presume to expand Goethe's image in a Homeric sense here, but believe I have said enough to be understood.

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Let us now see how Homer, before he lets Diomedes perform new deeds, portrays his strength in another direction in a second comparison. With the flooding stream he had shown us more the dynamic power of the hero; now, going a step further, he shows him filled with the power to intimidate the enemies. Diomedes becomes the target of an attack against which he was defenseless: Pandaros espies him too and pierces his shoulder with an arrow. Diomedes, however, pays no heed to the wound. His charioteer must pull the missile out for him, while he loudly calls upon Pallas Athene to let him become fit for battle again, if only to take revenge on Pandaros. Athene grants the request, and with triply inflamed courage Diomedes returns to the fray. In order to show what he understands by triply inflamed courage, Homer again brings a dramatic scene with its own turn.

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Shakespeare, when a simile was to portray the tripling of martial strength, used a means peculiar to him. In the third act of Macbeth, it says:

> Approach thou like the rugged Russian bear,
> The arm'd Rhinoceros, or the Hyrcan tiger, —

where the strength of the three animals is, as it were, summed up. Homer goes to work differently.

> Triple strength streamed through him, like the lion,
> Whom the shepherd with the sheep in the field,
> As he leaped over the fence, hit only lightly,
> But did not slay. And the lion's
> Wildness he provokes and fends him off no more,
> But feeling lonely he hides himself,
> While the sheep huddle close together,
> And the lion, starting with a leap,
> Is out of the deep fold again.

With what subtlety the poet accents the facts here. Not the bloody raging of the lion among the sheep (as Voss thinks), but the overwhelming terror he inspires is what Homer wants us to feel. We are to perceive how the Trojans begin to be filled with fear. Even when Phegeus and Idaios fell, we remember, it went through and through all the Trojans. And after that example of the stream breaking the dikes, it was said that the Trojan battle ranks no longer awaited Diomedes, even where they stood ever so thick. And when the treacherous arrow had hit Diomedes, Pandaros called out courage to the Trojans. They were in need of it! And now Diomedes' mere presence huddles them together like the powerless sheep, while the shepherd keeps himself hidden in the stable. Now Diomedes begins to kill on a large scale. The names of the falling fill the verses; closer circumstances are no longer given. Thus, things stand when the scene changes again and, from the Trojan side, Aeneas seeks to halt the victorious course of the Greeks.

Aeneas does not wish to encounter Diomedes in single combat: Pandaros, he desires, should send a second arrow at him.

What Pandaros has in common with Aeneas is that he, as was already noted above with Diomedes, is only the representative of a higher one. Homer lets both figures step in effectively because he needs them for the execution of his plan. But they too are required only at certain places in the poem. To be sure, Aeneas stands beside Hector as the strongest of the Trojans, but is yet only his substitute, because Hector alone must not perform all the heroic deeds. Aeneas is immediately what he is in Homer. He has no inner growth. As he comes, he goes away. Homer saves one of the most brilliant combat scenes in the twentieth canto as a conclusion of his appearance for him: he lets him encounter Achilleus, and this time only the quality of the weapons forged by divine hand may grant Achilles the upper hand. Nevertheless, we are not for a moment possessed by the feeling as if both stood facing each other as equals and as if Aeneas had been able to withstand Achilles out of his own strength, any more than we would credit Hector with that. Also, the fact that we hear, when Aeneas is removed from danger here by Poseidon, how Aeneas' descendants shall one day fall

into the lordship over Troy in place of the family of Priamos which is hated by the gods, [1] does not increase our interest in Aeneas.

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[1] I recall the manner of the Nibelungenlied to let stanzas, which are filled with the happiness and the hopes of individuals, close in a sudden reversal of thought in the fourth verse with the reference to calamity and transience. These interspersed tragic accents are peculiar to the Germanic folk song. Thus, in Homer's prophecies in favor of the family of Aeneas, the tone might lie not on their future lordship but on the downfall threatening the house of Priamos, according to the sense of the poet. To draw Homer's own experiences from this passage, as if he had lived at the court of the Aeneas dynasty and wished to glorify it, as Virgil did that of the Julians, seems questionable to me. Nothing can be proven here. Homer's apparent preference for Troy, his understanding of the urban way of thinking prevailing in Asia Minor, certainly let him appear as an accurate connoisseur of the life there; but this is faced by an equally deep understanding of Greek life; the glorification of Troy in the person of Hector is surpassed by that of the Greeks in the figure of Achilles. The heroism of these two men is represented with such equal love for both that not even the slightest preference for the one or the other emerges, and we would diminish the fame of the poet if we presupposed this bias in him. That subjective feeling presents Homer to my eyes as a Trojan, I will not deny.

Whether he came away in the fight with Achilles or was overtaken by fate, one as much as the other did not affect the course of the events of the Iliad, but he would remain indifferent as a mere grand appearance. Just the circumstance that his figure is dispensable for the events lets the splendor with which he is surrounded by the poet emerge all the more void of content. Pomp must replace what is lacking in personality. No tone of the heart comes from Aeneas' lips.

In the midst, then, of Diomedes' victorious course, Pandaros is to be persuaded to fire a second arrow at him. Here Homer's description goes into breadth. Pandaros refuses at first to do the shot, because the gods gave

his arrows a false direction anyway. Pandaros is sensitive like Paris. He is more concerned with his own success than with the cause for which he went out to Troy. He would like best of all to go home again on the spot. “Also, I lack,” says he, “the right team.” Eleven precious chariots he possesses and magnificent horses besides, but they are accustomed to too good fodder and might go to ruin for him in the battle. Thus, he preferred to appear as a foot soldier before Troy. In his bow he had hoped: but even that the gods did not let him use with success.

In the previous canto the shot had been described in detail with which Menelaos is wounded by Pandaros. As the poet lets Pandaros talk and act here now, he gives the continuation of that scene. Furious over the first arrow sent in vain, he describes to Aeneas how he, returning home, wants to break the bow and burn it. All that is told extremely vividly. Homer has for each of his main persons a mode of representation most suitable to it, and the diversity of tone within the cantos depends in part on this.

And neither Pandaros nor Aeneas are neglected as secondary persons, as far as the representation is concerned. The poet leads both through with love. Pandaros is, like all dilettantes who lack a main occupation filling the heart in life, a petty trifler. He depends on moods. He speaks of his feelings. Homer’s observation of people increases in individual traits to incredible subtlety.

For that scene which I have already brought forward above, where Hector seeks out Paris in his own house, Pandaros prepares us. Pandaros is a companion-piece to Paris, but a phenomenon in his own right. This division of characters belongs to the few things that allowed conclusions about preliminary stages of Homer’s poetry. In the earliest, simpler form of the Iliad—for it can only have originated gradually—Pandaros and Paris, Hector and Aeneas were perhaps only single persons.

Aeneas is now just as indulgent toward Pandaros, whom he wants to bring back into the fray, as Hector is toward Paris. He does not grab Pandaros by his honor, but represents the shot at Diomedes to him as a sport; he tries to instill interest in him by praising his horses to him. If

Pandaros wanted to shoot, he would gladly play the coachman. Aeneas, brought near to the social circle of the Olympian court by his mother Aphrodite, has the mild politeness of a prince of the blood who respects the weak spots of noble people who do not reach up to him. The conversation between Aeneas and Pandaros is one of the brilliant passages of the canto and would, translated into Shakespearean iambics, seem to belong in Troilus and Cressida. (Wonderful how Shakespeare in this play has sometimes hit upon Homer's genuine mood.) Also in this Pandaros resembles Paris, that, once in the battle, the heroic finally breaks through in him. For now he wants, because he had missed Diomedes with the arrow, rather to fight against him with the lance. That was the more honorable. Also Teukros, the brother of the Telamonian Ajax, occasionally lays the bow aside in order to proceed with the lance.

Both types of combat are also familiar to Paris. Let us now observe a strange oversight of the poet. Aeneas had wanted to serve as charioteer to Pandaros only so that the latter might shoot. If Pandaros, on the contrary, preferred to use the lance, then the negotiation was indeed useless. Aeneas was the lance-fighter. [1] The latter, however, seems not to pay attention to this, and so he and Pandaros, both on Aeneas' chariot, storm toward that of Diomedes.

[1] Since we do not know the original version of the Iliad, only conjectures remain. Either the original text contained the things more harmoniously, or Homer allowed himself inconsistencies that remained unnoticed, since the public always has only the main things in view. It could also be that different redactions by Homer himself were thrown together.

Homer works here now in full mastery. The attack of the two on Diomedes develops before us from their negotiations with each other; the encounter itself then, however, is introduced by the speeches exchanged between Diomedes and his charioteer Sthenelos. This conversation first turns into the dramatic action. Such transitions from epic to dramatic

dialogue show Homer rightly as a technician. This passage of the canto is so characteristic that I let it follow in extract.

Aeneas and Pandaros, then, coming from one side, have reached Diomedes, who, leaping from the chariot after his fashion, prefers to await them on foot. While Aeneas there encouraged Pandaros to the fight, Sthenelos here had rather wanted to persuade Diomedes to flight, because those two together were too strong against him:

> But looking from the side Diomedes called:
> Nothing of fear! It would little suit me
> To slink away! No, I leave the chariot:
> Here I will stand and await them! Pallas Athene
> Gives me confidence and strength; but those two
> Have for the last time the swift steeds
> Led against us! And even if one
> Rescued himself by fleeing: the team remains to us!

> Pay close attention! — if Athene grants to us
> Gloriously to slay them, then check our
> Steeds and bind the reins fast to the chariot,
> Leap over to Aeneas' team and drive it
> Swiftly to the ships out of the range of battle,
> For the runners are of special descent!
> Once Zeus had to the father of Ganymedes
> Given steeds, the best under the sun,
> To which Anchises then his mares
> Secretly drove, which a wonderful race
> Of noble foals bore him, four in number;
> And two he gave to his son: if we won those,
> We would have glory from it! — and as he speaks this,
> They already gallop up, and Pandaros calls:
> Courageous son of Tydeus! Since my arrow
> Fruitlessly glided through your armor: let me
> Now with the lance try it once more!

And he hurled it and it pierced through the shield
To the armor, and Pandaros exults aloud! —:
Ha, that hit the flank! Not much longer
Will you carry on and glory I have to thank you for!
Undaunted however called Diomedes:
Not hit! Missed! But of us two
One remains now! — and threw. And Pallas Athene
Guided the spear to the nose beneath the eye,
Where it, smashing hard through the white teeth,
Severed the tongue at the back and there, where chin
And cheek touch, came out again.
And the armor rattled, as from the chariot
Pandaros fell, and the steeds shied to the side.

Let us note once more how Pandaros is, as it were, rehabilitated by Homer through the fact that he falls in spear-combat. The poet spreads a shimmer of heroism over his figure.

With what art, however, has Homer mixed motifs into this duel which strengthen the interest of the listeners for its outcome. Pandaros has only one thing in view: he wants to hit Diomedes, whom he once missed, surely now. He seeks personal satisfaction. Diomedes, on the other hand, has his eye on the steeds of Aeneas. Such secondary intentions Homer often brings into the actions and intensifies the participation of the listeners thereby.

The average public, whose mood is so important to the poet, demands besides the excitation of great heroic feelings always also the satisfaction of commoner expectations which correspond to its understanding. For the Greeks, the question of booty was a meaningful one. And therefore, after Pandaros has fallen, the tension still remains: will Diomedes take possession of the horses?

Aeneas circles the body of the prostrate Pandaros like a “lion with a roar.” Diomedes, however, seizes a block of rock which two men cannot carry, and hurls it at Aeneas’ hip joint, so that the jagged stone tears the flesh and the one struck collapses forward. With his sinewy right hand

Aeneas pushes himself up. It grows dark before his eyes. His mother Aphrodite, however, embracing him with her arms, lets her white garment flutter before him and carries him away. Then Sthenelos, the charioteer of Diomedes, gives the steeds of Aeneas to a comrade to lead them to the ships; he himself mounts the chariot again, on which Diomedes now storms after the departing goddess. In the midst of the throng he still reaches her. Now it happens for the first time that a god is wounded by a mortal. Athene had strictly enjoined Diomedes, when she let him recover in an instant from the arrow-shot of Pandaros, not to touch any of the fighting Olympian deities, one only excepted: Aphrodite. She was most hated by her. Diomedes does not yet know what power is protectively defending the unconscious Aeneas, and only when he has reached Aphrodite in the dense thicket does he recognize her. Unwarlike she appeared to him, says the poet. He swings the lance and wounds her through the ambrosial garment, "which the Charites wove,"

> Above the wrist, and ichor leaped
> From the wound — clear juice, not human
> Blood, for they eat and drink not like humans,
> Are called immortal gods rather — then she cried
> Aloud and threw her son to the earth — him
> Phoebus enveloped in dark clouds — and
> Diomedes cried aloud: Away from the battle of men,

> Daughter of Zeus! Is it not enough for you, helpless
> Women to lead away from the right path?
> But if you wish to strive with men, then I think,
> Shudder you will from now on before war,
> Even if from afar you only heard it named!
> But fleet Iris bore wind-swiftly
> The exhausted and as if dazed goddess
> Away from the battle, and she groaned aloud with pain,
> And black was her hand from the dark blood.
> There sat far from the throng the mighty Ares.
> Against a black cloud leaned his spear,

And up upon it stood his steeds
And his chariot, and Aphrodite, kneeling
Falling to his knees, begged her brother
To give her the gold-harnessed steeds:
"Brother, save me, let me have the steeds,
That I may reach Olympus, the dwelling of gods!
For a mortal struck me, and hot burns
My wound: Tydeus' son Diomedes,
Who now against our great father Zeus
Himself would rise up in battle!"
And Ares gladly gave the gold-frontletted steeds
To his sister, and she stepped
With heavy heart into the chariot, and Iris
Beside her took the reins in her hands,
Struck the horses, and they flew away
Swiftly up to Olympus, the seat of the gods.
There now Iris stopped with the horses, loosed them
And scattered ambrosial fodder before them;
But Aphrodite, the beautiful, sank before the knees
Of her mother Dione, who took her
Gently in her arms, stroked her with her hand,
Spoke and called her by name: Who, dear child,
Of the heavenly ones has done this? Has treated you
So insolently, as if you had before them all
Done evil? And she, who so gladly laughed,
Said in tears now: The son of Tydeus
Has struck me, the hard Diomedes!
Because I wanted to save from the throng my son,
My dear Aeneas,
Who is the dearest to me of all humans.
But Trojans and Greeks fight now
Not with each other alone: the men are now
Attacking the immortals!
And the divine mother said to her:

Grieve not and endure it, dear daughter.
Much have the inhabitants of Olympus already endured
From men in mutual combat.
Ares so, when Otos and Ephialtes
Put him in fetters, in which he lay
Thirteen months; then he would have perished,
If Eriboea had not betrayed it to Hermes,
Who like a thief freed him from custody.
And already he could do no more! And so also Hera,
When Herakles hit her right on the breast
With the arrow and she suffered raging pains.
And also the terrible Hades had to suffer,
When the same son of Zeus struck him
Down at the gate of the dead: then he climbed groaning
Up to Olympus, the arrow stuck in his shoulder,
Where Paeon with soothing means healed him,
For he was indeed not born mortal.
Terrible man, who attacks Olympian gods!
But Athene incited Diomedes!
Fool, who knows not that he who attacks immortals,
Perishes himself; never will
Children, playing around his knees, call out “Papa,”
When he returns home. Let him mark well:
One who is stronger could encounter him,
And his wife might start up sobbing from sleep,
To mourn her young husband.
And with both hands she took the hand
Of Aphrodite and wiped away the blood,
Whole was she again now and without pain.
But Athene and Hera, looking over,
Provoked Zeus with shameful words. And
Athene began: Father Zeus, you may
Take it ill: it seems as if Aphrodite
Once again wanted to talk a Greek woman

Into making off for Troy, and has, stroking her,
Scratched her hand on a bracelet. But smiling
The father of gods and men called the golden
Aphrodite to him and said: Child,
Leave to Athene the works of war, and to Ares:
Yours are the works of love and of marriage.
Thus those spoke. — But Diomedes
Stormed forward against Aeneas. —

Let us observe how the poet interrupts the combat with this fairy tale of gods and how beautifully he leads us just as suddenly back into the battle. Homer's peculiarity is already known to us: in the same manner he had, in the third canto, let the two scenes in which Helen appears be broken off.

Let us further observe how, with Aphrodite's appearance, the events become fairy-tale-like in a new sense. Until then, a deity was permitted to envelop any of their protégés with darkness or to carry them away through the air. This time, where Aeneas lay far closer to Aphrodite's heart than Paris before, she wants to drag him away from the battle like a mortal woman her son, drops him when she is wounded by Diomedes, and implores Ares to give her his horses; while Athene at the same time has arrived on Olympus with the speed of thought and sits beside Hera. And further, while just before at the fall of Aeneas a fluttering corner of Aphrodite's garment had sufficed to keep the missiles away, Diomedes' throwing-spear cuts through the fabric on the goddess's own body. Ares, however, we see leaning his spear against a cloud, on the height of which his steeds have their place.

To make us forget these contradictions again immediately is not Homer's greatest art here, but it consists in his letting Aphrodite, who is the mother and grandmother of mighty heroes, fall down before her mother like a poor thing of fifteen years and be caressed by Zeus like a poor girl. Without knowing of Homer, Raphael applies the same means to lend warmer interest to the scenes from Aphrodite's life with which he decorated the Farnesina. Where he represents Venus as she flies up to Jupiter as a suppliant petitioner

with her team of doves, Raphael lends the goddess, who appears nearby as a powerful woman, the forms of a young girl whom the whole world has wronged, and who flees up to heaven in need of protection. With such wonderful brilliance of color both artists endow the things that we ourselves become children who, enjoying with wide eyes, gladly put up with everything and demand more.

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And let us finally observe: how strangely, in continuation of what the earlier cantos brought, the existence of the Olympian family is further presented to us here. Already we had heard in the first canto that the almighty Zeus had once been fettered by Hera and Athene, until Thetis freed him, and how the secretly enduring rebellion of the other gods was only kept down by his colossal superior power. Now we are told how Ares too would once almost have perished in chains. The gods are depicted as bloodless immortals whom no one can harm, and at the same time it is told how Herakles had aimed his arrows at Hades, the ruler of the underworld, and at Hera. The gods appear like robber knights who, dwelling around their leader on an unapproachable high castle, are every day expectant that mortals and Titans will rebel against their rule. As if in dark dungeons lies the fallen old family, Kronos and the others, fettered in the depths of the earth. There they await the day that will give the rule back to them. And once more the tone in which this Olympian band interacts with one another strikes us in the conversations of the immortals. They seek, since for the time being they may not strike, at least to annoy each other. And nevertheless, as soon as they come into contact with humans, dignity and majesty and infallible power flow around them and beauty!

This family of Zeus has, besides the gods whom we see playing along so overpoweringly, yet other components that do not appear so quite graspable. We saw how the mortals of the Iliad divide into two halves: those to whom Homer lends their own development of fate, and those who only operate as elements without the stamp of true individuality. Aphrodite’s mother Dione is a colorless figure. What is Enyo, who fights beside Athene, like, and Ossa, Eris and Erinnys? And “Zeus’s daughter” Guilt, who ensnares her father himself, and whom he hurls by her shining locks from

Olympus to the earth? None of these doubtful beings is described so intimately.

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Hurrying through the lands, Guilt harms men. Behind her come other daughters of Zeus, “the repentant Prayers,” who, lame, wrinkled and squinting, seek to make good as healers what Guilt has ruined. [1]

[1] IX, 502 ff. We have seen before how these beings fluctuate between concept and person. Compare how Dante speaks in the Convito about Amor, whom he lets appear as a person, while he at the same time assures us that he has no form but is only a shapeless concept. Cf. also IV, 440 ff.

No matter how realistically they are represented, they do not lose the appearance of symbolic shadows. They assert themselves, but do not act under changing impulses. They experience nothing with a human heart like the ruling family. They are divinities more than gods. Perhaps superior in strength to the sons and daughters of Zeus, they nevertheless remain personally uninvolved beside the more legitimate inhabitants of the heavenly palaces half in the background. they are like distant relatives who, condemned to insignificant generality, probably only exceptionally take part in the banquet when Zeus and his own sit at table. All these Olympians of various degrees Homer lets us gradually become acquainted with in their peculiar relationship, and it will yet be spoken of.

We stand in the middle of the canto.

The main events are still missing. Homer is mighty enough to be permitted to take what has been told up to here only as an introduction to a new beginning of events which, in their sequence covering the same path once more, end in a second Olympian scene which far surpasses the one just experienced in vividness. Homer maintains the tone once struck for the second part of our canto. The ice is broken: gods and men strike out at each other quite differently than at the beginning. To the son of Tydeus, after he has chased Aphrodite away wounded, the shyness to measure himself with

gods has been lost. Against Apollo, who has now undertaken to cover the helpless Aeneas with his shield, he advances.

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His wish is to rob Aeneas, whose team he successfully obtained, also of his armor. Three times he storms at him. When he comes for the fourth time, Apollo scares him back with terrible threats and carries Aeneas to the holy Pergamon into his own temple, where Artemis and Latona tend the wounded man, while on the battlefield a phantom created by him remains, around which the battle rages further: of the Trojans who defend it, and of the Greeks who strive to snatch it from them. Apollo, however, knows how to bring Ares, who still kept far from the fight, back into the fray now. In the form of the Thracian prince Akamas, who with his people belongs to the Trojan auxiliary nations, Ares now incites the Trojans to increased defense of Aeneas still lying there wounded in the phantom. At the same time Hector becomes alive with double zeal. In renewed rage the peoples go at each other, while Aeneas, quickly healed, appears again on the battleground. A series of magnificent similes increase our participation. Peaceful family stories and landscape images break through the sight of the sinking heroes, while then again there is talk of raging lions which transport us back into the throng of the combatants. Homer knows the nature of the lion exactly.

Finally, for a moment only for the time being, the name of Diomedes becomes audible again, as if the poet had been concerned to remind us of him first provisionally, as of one who would come when the need for the Greeks grew. A passing appearance announces his permanent re-entry.

Hector had been on the battlefield until then the one whose weapons nothing resisted. Ares, now no longer in foreign form but visible in full own majesty, strides before Hector, swinging the terrible lance, beside him Enyo with gruesome shouting and din. With these two champions Hector is seen by Diomedes, who, recognizing Ares, is startled and gives way.

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The poet brings a comparison:

Just as a man who, wandering uncertainly across
The grassy plain, suddenly
Makes a halt before a water that swiftly
To the sea flows along:
Stares startled into the swirling
Foam and leaps
Backwards — so Diomedes.

This time, then, Diomedes still avoids the fighting god. For some time he disappears again, and Hector presses forward victoriously. Ever more numerous, fall upon fall, the Greeks begin to sink down under his lance. Of Homer's art of depicting fatal wounds, each different in its kind, there was talk above. In none, throughout the whole Iliad, does he repeat himself. It seems, if one brings the descriptions together in thought, as if such a series of accurately observed wounds could only have accumulated in Homer's memory from long years of own experience, for how would an imagination be conceivable that invented all that without observation? But we remember Shakespeare! Who was no more than an actor and later a private citizen, and who, wherever he turns with his thoughts, manifests a knowledge of nature and of life and of the human organism and of history as if he had permeated everything. Let us beware of drawing a limit (corresponding after all only to our own limitation) to the immediate power of observation of great men. The things and events stand before Homer's eyes: he observes them intensively and experiences them. And we see and feel them like him. He has us in his power. The *ἀνὴρ ἀπάλαμνος* is a man who knows not to which side he should turn. Only at the moment where a step further would have let him drown does the swiftly flowing water startle him. He leaps back, as if arms could pull him down. In the midst of the lonely meadowland, we stand beside the wanderer. We have the silent moist expanse before our eyes. We are transported into silence far from the battlefield. Let us observe with what certainty Homer here draws for his comparison upon what is apparently the absolute opposite.

Surrounded by deep abandonment that man finds himself suddenly at the edge of a stream, and in the midst of the raging throng of the battle Ares and

Diomedes suddenly encounter each other. The poet's intention was to let the unexpected, the fright, and the leaping back become quite clear.

Ares' wounding by Diomedes is the point in the second half of the canto to which the events are intended to lead us. As Athene had set Diomedes upon Aphrodite, so she now also makes Ares the target of the lance of a mortal. The mightier deed required mightier, broader preparation. Homer had until then transported Athene with the speed of thought from Olympus to the battlefield and back again to Olympus: now however, where Diomedes is to go at Ares, the daughter of Zeus must go out to battle in full martial splendor. Where the events go so much into the colossally wonderful, the poet need not fear critical calculation on the part of his listeners.

To us Pallas Athene lies too much in our feeling from the Odyssey. There she is Telemachus's maternal friend who takes care of the young candidate for life and of his father. Also it lies in our thoughts that she, as the patron goddess of Athens, seems to have brought forth all that which the highest culture of a free citizenry comprises within itself. She is peaceful. She lets the olive tree thrive. She weaves. Her gold-shining image towers over the city and gleams into the distance. In the Iliad Athene is the irritated unwedded one. The lonely girl who has had no mother and who allied herself in cold calculation with the spouse of her father who was brooding over neglects. She has her protégés, but she is hard as the rock of Olympus. Woe to those whom she pursues! Aphrodite especially has excited malicious hatred in her. Let us consider the magnificent head of Athene, which probably conveys a lost work of Phidias just as well as the countenance of the Zeus of Otricoli contains the Zeus of Phidias: how in Athene, in the slightly hanging corners of the mouth, translated into the eternally virginal, the trait becomes visible which in Hera has been demonstrated as the decisive one.

This Hera also goes back to Phidias, the oldest and most deeply penetrating interpreter of Homer. Athene represents the merciless criticism in the circle of those born of Zeus. While Hera from time to time lets herself be carried

away to ill-considered utterances and deeds, such weaknesses are far from Athene. She knows how to keep silent. Her ears, however, she has always open. Her enemies she wants not merely to strike down, but to destroy. For Ares it suffices to lay about him: he has no further plans, he wants to bring his fists to bear. Athene has sworn destruction to the Trojans and every means is right for her to carry through her will. The Athene of the Odyssey is benevolent, helpful, tender, good-natured, she pours beauty over Odysseus when he encounters Nausicaa: the Athene of the Iliad is an inexorable goddess. She gives Diomedes the permission now to take it up also with Ares.

Let us see now how the goddess prepares herself for her departure. It was Hera who had observed that the Achaeans, when Ares took the lead of the Trojans, came more and more into disadvantage. She now calls upon Athene to arm herself, while she herself intends to harness the steeds. Gold and silver and bronze and iron must now unite to let the chariot arise before us, which the serviceable Hebe joins together ready for travel and to which Hera yokes the horses. At length it is reported in a whole series of verses how the vehicle was fashioned. Piece by piece Homer's listeners admire the chariot, whose various parts he names and which we now see driving forward.

Athene, on the other hand, throws on her father's battle-garment, puts on his helmet, in whose interior the combatants from a hundred cities would find protection, puts on the aegis and mounts the chariot, while Hera swings the lash. The gates of Olympus crack open, but before the goddesses drive down into the depths, a halt is made at the highest peak of the mountain where Zeus has his seat. Hera demands that Zeus himself should give her the authority to put a stop to Ares, who has been incited by Aphrodite and Apollo, and he grants it.

And once more she lashes the steeds, and storming along between heaven and earth they reach the place where before Troy the Simois and Skamandros unite. Here on the bank Hera spreads dense clouds around her vehicle, while for the steeds ambrosia sprouts up for nourishment. Then she

penetrates into the throng where the battle rules most furiously, and in Stentor's form she seeks with a voice of thunder to bring the Achaeans to a stand. Athene however hurries to Diomedes. She finds him as he cools the wound which the arrow of Pandaros had bored into his arm. Under the pressure of the shield-strap it had broken open again, and Diomedes, sitting there with a stiff arm, washes off the black blood. One should note how happily Homer avails himself of this wound to give Athene opportunity to spur Diomedes fresh to the fight. Of his father she reminds him, whom she, gifted with a small stature indeed but animated by invincible strength, sets before him as a model. Thus Homer introduces the last scene with which he now concludes the canto.

Diomedes, incited by Athene's words, mounts the chariot to drive against Ares. Thrusting the charioteer from the seat, the goddess takes over his office and drives Diomedes' steeds on. Ares, quite like a mortal robbing the heroes slain by him of their armor, is just then busy taking off the breastplate of the mortally struck Periphas. As soon as he espies the approaching Diomedes, he lets the corpse lie and hurries toward him. Leaning far over the yoke of the chariot, Ares aims the lance, but Athene guides its point past Diomedes, while she lets the lance of Diomedes, now whizzing toward Ares, fly into the god's flank so forcefully that he, bellowing like nine thousand men, fills Trojans and Greeks with terror.

Now one of those turns with which Homer concludes his cantos and of which he alone is capable. He and Shakespeare. For only the latter understands like him how to hold the thread of the innermost action tautly fast in seemingly wildly jumbled scenes. Ares, wounded and helpless, knows, like Aphrodite, nothing better than to betake himself straightway to Olympus to the father of gods and men, to whose mild heart an appeal is never made in vain.

And as the sunny day suddenly becomes night,
When the storm heaps up thunderclouds,
So Tydeus' son saw the brazen Ares
Enveloped in clouds storming up to heaven.

Sadly he sits down there beside his father, shows how the blood flows from the wound, and breaks out into laments and accusations.

Zeus reproaches him, calls him a “scoundrel to the whole world” and rebukes him for his “whining.” Like his mother Hera he is hated by him, to whom no reason could be brought even through words. Then however, after he has thus told him the truth, he forgives. Of his race he was after all. Were that not so, he would long since be lying with the children of Uranos in the deep chasms below.

Strange again is the familial accent of the language sounding out from the mere content of the speeches, in which father and son exchange their feelings. Did the poet intend that his listeners break out into laughter at such passages? What had Homer in mind thereby? Were they perhaps allusions to certain contemporary events? Thoroughly like a comedy is the effect of the turn of mood now occurring, as at the end of the first canto, where a general banquet had calmed and united the Cronides all again. Zeus gives the Olympian house-physician Paeon the command to heal Ares, which happens immediately. Thereupon Hebe must bathe him and clothe him with a fresh garment. And then Ares sits beside his father — not with “joyful defiance,” as Voss translates, but — in the high feeling of being allowed to do what he wants and of having the necessary power for it, and the matter is forgotten and settled. Homer lends the same mood to Zeus himself later when he looks down from Ida upon the battle of the Greeks and Trojans. Prehistoric Asiatic rulers could have hovered before Homer’s mind there, who had nothing against it that the peoples whom their scepter encompassed made war among themselves and thus facilitated the governing for them. And whose sons and daughters sometimes participated therein for pleasure.

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Meanwhile Athene and Hera have also come home again. Happy in the consciousness that Ares had been rendered harmless.

The enormous turns and exertions of the fifth canto find, as in the first, their conclusion in the final calming of the heavenly family. The battue is over once again. —

We see that in this canto gods and men enter into surprising contacts. Compared with the preceding cantos, the fifth appears as if animated by unaccustomed fire, while the later ones far surpass it therein. If we only compare it with the next following sixth canto, it stands out clearly how the poet endeavored, as far as the mood and as far as the change of scene are concerned, to fashion things always differently again. For we shall see how a mild, reconciling tone asserts itself there, and instead of violent deeds only opposing words and opinions dominate the scene. From the battlefield we are transported into the interior of both the city and the camp, and even on the battleground we hear speeches, while before only blood flowed. These contrasts must be recalled here in advance so that we take note how the poet calculated the architectural value of the individual cantos for the entire composition.

The fifth canto is in its structure one of the most regular. Six times the perspective changes. First the side of the Trojans, then the Greeks, then Olympus; in the second part of the canto the same sequence. Also the addition of the episodes, which could be compared with ornaments, occurs according to laws with a view to the whole. This subtlety of execution the poem perhaps attained only gradually, but only the poet himself can have given it to it.

A part of the episodes I have left unmentioned. Thus the beginning of the fates of Sarpedon. Homer strikes a special tone with him by which he emphasizes his figure.

Sarpedon is one of the earthly sons of Zeus to whom immortality was not granted, but whom their great father never lets out of his sight. He fights on the Trojan side. In the same moment Sarpedon and Tlepolemos hurl the lances and hit each other. Both fall. Tlepolemos wounded to death with a pierced throat, Sarpedon hit in the thigh by the lance, in which it remains sticking close to the bone.

> But their friends bore Sarpedon then
> Away from the battlefield. But the weighty lance —
> Which trailing behind stuck in his thigh and which no one

Pulled out for him so that he could walk —
Made him heavy; and no one thought of it,
Because the necessity and the work pressed them.
And then the helm-fluttered Hector stormed
Through the throng toward them, and his sight was
Comforting to the son of Zeus and he called to him
In a sad tone: O son of Priamos! suffer
Not that I lie here as booty of the Greeks!
Ward them off so that I in Ilion's walls
May die, as is destined for me. For of my home
And of my wife and of the infant son
I shall never again rejoice! But Hector hurried
Forward past him without answer;
The enemies filled his thoughts,
Whom he wished to strike to the ground today.
And the friends laid the son of Zeus
Down beneath the father's holy beech,
And from the wound one pulled the lance for him
And it became dark before his eyes.
But then he suddenly breathed again,
For the north wind's cooling breath refreshed,
Soughing through the leaves of the holy tree,
The life into the laboring breast once more.

Homer breaks off here, as we already know. Every word further would have taken from the image's effect. Everything has indeed been said: Zeus does not want Sarpedon to perish here. Only in the sixteenth canto comes the day that shall be his last. We shall then see how the poet there, as far as feeling and language are concerned, connects with what is told here.

We are to feel that Sarpedon's entire existence runs its course under strange stars of its own. In our feeling the widely separated parts of Sarpedon's course of life join together into a whole, and we hardly become conscious of how fragmentarily they have been communicated to us.

On this further this.

Aesthetic sensitivity is, just like linguistic sensitivity, exposed to the danger of over-stimulation. I have precisely with these remarks wanted to guard myself against the reproach of assuming conscious mental connection where only chance could rule. Meanwhile it must be permitted at least to express observations of this kind under reservation.

I have found not only in Homer but also in more recent writers that, when certain main impressions are to be given, they sometimes announce these beforehand in individual notes as if by chance incidentally. Much as when thunderstorms are approaching, the day before already quite light little clouds from the west as forerunners fly hastily across the completely clear sky. We hear Sarpedon, still unwounded, calling to Hector in the battle that he may persevere. Mindful of his own wife and his children, he begs him to preserve the Trojan women from the fate of being caught one day as if in an enormous net and led away. And when he lies there, as we have heard, wounded to death according to his feeling, he implores Hector, storming past once more, to lead him into the interior of the city so that he may die there if it should not be granted to him to see his wife and his son again. Hector hurries on. Twice the same thought!

Precisely that was later to be the lot of Hector himself: to sink down outside before the city without seeing wife and child again! In the sixth canto there follows then the shattering farewell of Hector from Andromache, which, if we consider Hector’s whole fate, is already announced here in the fifth canto as if with a first light pluck at the strings.

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Possible it would be that I hear too much out of Homer’s verses here. I might have been misled to do so, however, by the fact that to us, the further we advance in the cantos of the Iliad, from ever more sides the proofs come that the poet carried the enormous arrangement of the Iliad in all nuances, somewhat as in a colossal opera the composer carries all orchestral parts, individually and equally in his mind. Certain motifs announce themselves only quite softly until they dominate. —

Diomedes dominates in our canto what occurs on the Greek side. On the Trojan Hector, who has to share with Aeneas and Pandaros. With the Olympians Athene is the directress of the action. Beside her Apollo, Aphrodite, and Ares step visibly into the foreground. Athene however begins the canto and concludes it. We do not get forward, taken outwardly, nevertheless. For as long as Achilles holds himself back, nothing decisive for or against the Greeks can happen. This dragging-on we feel.

It would however not be permitted to excise the fifth from the series of the twenty-four cantos of the Iliad as dispensable. Intentionally the poet strengthens our feeling of the futility of the enormous wrestling between Greeks and Trojans before Achilles is reconciled. The urge in us swells to encounter events that bring the decision.

Sixth Book

After the powerful fifth canto the sixth sounds like an adagio. There action alone was taken; the spoken word sounded like breathless shouting and calling: here the thoughts ring out calmly.

Not suddenly however does Homer let the mood change. The first seventy verses are still filled with the battle. Only this beginning however represents things from the side of the Greeks: soon Troy rises before us in full splendor. For only later do we learn that the city suffered under the war. That jewels and treasures from the houses began to be sold.

Until now the poet wants to betray nothing of it to us. The wealth and splendor of Ilion spread out in our imagination. Mighty gates and towers tower up all around the royal citadel, and Priamos' palace stands fully inhabited by sons and daughters in smooth, shining walls still upright. All the decorative epithets which say this have overflowing content.

"Lonely became the battle of the Trojans and Greeks," begins the poet. The gods have vented their rage and grant the mortals the freedom to

encounter each other only in their own strength. Immediately the Greeks are now at an advantage and press the Trojans back toward the city. Ajax, Diomedes, and Menelaos strike down before them whatever comes in their way. The courses of life of the sinking are told: always they are men who were suddenly snatched into the war out of a peaceful existence. Citizens who defend their land. The poet awakens in us an indefinite feeling of the defenselessness of those of whom the Trojan army consisted. Most beautifully the downfall of Adrestos is depicted, where in one of those conflicts between humanity and raison d'état Agamemnon appears hard again, even if entitled thereto.

> Then Adrestos became Menelaos' prisoner.
> His team got stuck in the brushwood,
> And the steeds, turning around with the chariot,
> Broke off the pole and ran off,
> Toward Troy, whither other horses
> Torn loose still turned. But Adrestos,
> Whirled out of the vehicle aside
> And cast down into the dust on his countenance,
> Lay there; beside him however with the lance
> Stood Menelaos! and embracing his knees
> Adrestos cried and implored: O Atride!
> Mercy! Pity! With plentiful ransom
> Will my father, who has bronze and iron and gold,
> And who possesses manifold goods, ransom me,
> When he hears that I live! And Menelaos
> Was moved by the imploring of Adrestos and he was willing
> To tell his people that they should lead him
> Away to the ships. But Agamemnon

> Stepped against him. "Shall weak-hearted melancholy
> Keep life for him? Truly the Trojans
> Managed once for you in the house so beautifully the household!
> Down with them all! None escapes!
> Even the young in the mother's womb must

Die without name and without mercy!”
And thus saying what was right, the king turned
The mind of his brother. He thrust Adrestos
From him, and Agamemnon stabbed with the lance
Into his belly, that he fell over, and he stepped
On his shoulder and pulled out the lance.

Something disturbingly business-like, one might say executioner-like, lies in the doing of Agamemnon. No mercy! is his motto. Adrestos was not defeated, he had taken a fall: all the same: Down with him! Voss translates the scene too indistinctly. Soon it is shown now why the poet paints precisely it in such glaring colors. He uses it as a prelude for the encounter of Glaukos and Diomedes, who recognize each other on the battlefield as sons of former guest-friends and, instead of attacking each other, exchanging their armors while renewing the friendship of the fathers. This meeting is one of the most beautiful and rightly most famous scenes which primeval poetry has depicted. As a benefit we feel in it that none of the gods incited the simply human stirring of the two heroes to evil ways. We say to ourselves that without the unrestrained passion of the heavenly ones the mortals would long since have come to reconciliation and settlement. And at the same time the certainty that soon enough the storms coming from Olympus will set everything fresh in flames below and destroy it fills us with the tragic feeling of the futility of all the enormous exertions. —

Up to the walls of the city the Trojans had been pressed back when Helenos, one of the sons of Priamos, calls upon Hector to order prayers within Troy in the sanctuary of Athene. The old men and women of the city shall call upon the goddess and promise her sacrifices.

It lay according to the views of the Homeric people in the gracious acceptance of such offerings an obligation for the gods. Cutting through the hosts of the fighting Trojans, whom he fires up so powerfully in an encouraging shout to new exertions that the Greeks begin to give way again, Hector hurries away.

Thus he went, and against the ankles struck him

And against the neck the rim of black leather
Which surrounded his shield.

How do these words paint almost in a modern sense the enormous shield that hangs on the back of the departing Hector, and which, striking above and below, covers the whole figure from the heel to above the shoulders. We remember this passage later when Hector says of himself in the city that the Trojans, even when he had gone, longing for his return, had looked around after him. And still later when Andromache stops and looks after him.

While in Hector's absence fighting continues before the city, Homer lets the encounter between Glaukos and Diomedes take place, which instills a feeling of friendly calming in us. There becomes, although we hear that the battle continues, a certain appeasement master over us, and we accompany Hector in the expectation that, as long as he is missing outside, nothing ruinous to the Trojans can occur. But not merely therefore does Homer interrupt the course of events with an episode whose long conversations and almost idyllic outcome do not seem to belong here. Our attention is intended to turn away from the battlefield altogether. Broadly presented strange family stories are liked to be applied by Homer to purify the mood. Had he, with this story wedged, one could say, into its place in the sixth canto, only been concerned to report the fact of the encounter between Glaukos and Diomedes, then a dozen verses would have sufficed. Hector however was to be displaced from our memory for a short time, and the poet executes far-flung things with ease which gradually take possession of our thoughts. [1]

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[1] Landscape images also perform good service. We saw how in the first canto the detailed narrative of the journey to Chryse was to be explained thus. The episode must have its own turn. The most beautiful example of an episode of this kind within modern literature is formed by the letters of May 30 and September 4 inserted by Goethe into the new edition of his Werther, both being connected and containing the story, foreign to the novel, of the peasant lad seized by a passion for his mistress. Preceding the main scenes of the novel, the two letters create in reading, through the fact that they

claim his thoughts and his feeling for themselves, pure mood and increased receptivity. Goethe has here proceeded thoroughly in the sense of Homer.

The narrative continues with the two opponents, who, storming toward one another and challenging each other with boastful words, suddenly realize that they are the sons of old guest-friends. At great length, they report their family histories to one another. Descending from their chariots, they join hands, renew the bond of friendship of their fathers, and agree to avoid one another in battle henceforth. Finally, since such alliances are not concluded without mutual gifts, they exchange their armor. Diomedes' and Glaukos' beautiful, open natures reveal themselves. We have the feeling that the first step toward reconciliation between the warring nations is being taken here.

Just as Homer let this episode enter without transition, so he resumes without transition the narrative of what Hector experiences in the city. Even before he enters Ilion, outside at the Scaean gate where the beech tree stands, he is met by the women, who ask after their husbands and sons. He commands them to implore Athene in prayer.

It is the prerogative of genius to take us by the hand and turn us from strangers into long-time residents of new circumstances. The gate, the city, the citadel, the dwellings of the king and his sons are as familiar to us as if we ourselves had walked those paths. Yet these streets were drawn only in the poet's soul. What are today the doubtfully shimmering remains of Trojan structures to us alongside those palaces and walls of Homeric imagination?

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So great is Hector's haste that he scorns the drink his old mother offers him. Only with clean hands, he says, may the cup be grasped. This detail—that we see the hands stiff with blood and dust, with not a minute to spare to clean them—expresses wonderfully the immense compulsion with which Hector is driven back into the heat of battle. Only one thing lies on his heart: the Trojan women must gather in the temple of Athene and entreat her. A strange-sounding prayer now flows from their lips after Theano, the priestess, has laid a holy garment as a gift upon the knees of the goddess's

image. We also know Theano from the fifth canto, where she was praised as the loving foster-mother of Pedaios, slain by Meges.

Now the prayer:

> Mighty Pallas, city-shattering goddess!
> Break the lance of Diomed and let him
> Fall down into the dust before the Scaean gate!
> On his face! Then we will bring at once twelve bulls
> To you in the temple as a sacrifice. Oh, have mercy
> Upon the city and the women and our children!

The goddess, however, does not accept the prayer. Let us recall in what mild light Homer had just allowed the one for whose downfall they pray in such cruel words to appear. The poet was well aware of this contrast. He awakens in us the feeling of the impossibility that such a harsh desire could be fulfilled. Indeed, we almost sense that it must strike back upon those from whom it originated.

Hector, however, has long since hurried away. Other worries press upon him. In those moments when all of Troy lay breathless under an oppressive cloud of sorrow, Paris alone has no feeling to spare for the distress he has brought upon everyone. That meeting of the two brothers takes place, which was already described above.

Only now does the urgency of the moment become clear, as Hector finds his brother unconcerned among precious pieces of armor, as if their purpose were only to form a museum. Only now do we feel the full extent of that “silence” in Hector. And the full goodness of his nature with which he treats Helen. Just as frivolous as her current husband, the beautiful woman, since nothing can be done anyway, wants at least to have a little chat with Hector. The terrible events present themselves to her only from the side of whether they grant an opportunity to spend a few minutes chatting carelessly. Enjoyment of the moment. And Hector understands that too and asks tenderly not to be detained. It did not occur to Helen that Andromache and the child were in the world and had rights to Hector.

Only now do we also recognize for what purpose Homer represents Paris's and Helen's existence so precisely right here. They must serve him as a background for what he now intends to let happen.

Andromache has not yet been named by the poet. Neither in the second canto, where the Trojan women watched the battle of their husbands and sons against the Greeks from the walls, nor in the sixth, just now, when they stormed Hector with anxious questions at the holy beech before the Scaean gate. Only when Helen tries to compel Hector to enter and sit down does Hector mention his wife and his child with touching modesty, almost as if he had to apologize for their existence.

Now, finally, he strides toward his own house.

> But Hector found in the chambers
> Nowhere Andromache. For she stood with the child
> Still on the tower and lamented there and wept.
> And when he found his wife nowhere in the house,
> He stepped to the doorway of the house:
> "Maidens, tell me the truth quickly: whither
> Has she gone, Andromache? Did she perhaps go
> To her brothers-in-law or her sisters-in-law?
> Or does she pray with the other women,
> To reconcile the terrible goddess who is angry with us,
> There with entreaties and pleas?"

> But the stewardess of the house said:
> Since you command the truth, then hear:
> Neither to her brothers-in-law nor sisters-in-law,
> Nor to the temple of Athene has she gone,
> No, on the tower she stands, for she learned
> That the Achaeans were victorious; then she ran,
> And the maiden followed her, who carries the child.
> But Hector hurried back the same way
> He came, down the street,
> To the gate where the path leads out into the field.

There Andromache came running toward him,
His dear consort, Eetion's daughter,
Who in Thebe, at the foot of wooded Plakos,
Ruled over Cilicia's men: whose
Daughter Hector once won, and her he met
Now at the Scaean gate along with the servant,
With the child at her breast, the dear child,
The infant son, whom his father himself
Liked to call Scamandrios; but the others
Called him Astyanax, because Hector alone
Held and protected Troy.
And he smiled silently over the child,
And Andromache stood at his side,
Weeping she reached for his hand and said:
Your courage will yet destroy you! And have you no pity
For your child, the little worm, nor for your wife,
Who will soon be your poor widow?
For soon the Achaeans will kill you,
All against you alone! But for me it would be,
Without you, better to die! For I have
Nothing more to comfort me when you sink down.
Father and mother I have no more. My father
Achilles killed when he destroyed high-towered
Thebe. But he did not despoil him:
Reverently he burned him with his armor,
And a mound he heaped up over him,
And the nymphs who inhabit the mountain
Planted elms around. Seven brothers had I:
All Achilles sacrificed on that day
Among bulls and sheep. But my mother
He led away to the camp and set her free
When ransom was offered to him: but Diana
Then killed her with her arrows.
You are father and mother to me! You my brother!

You my husband! Have mercy and stay with me!
Do not let your child be orphaned! Nor your wife
Lose everything! Station the people there
At the fig tree, where the path to the city
Is easy and the wall stands open to attack.
Three times the Greeks have already stormed up there,
Whether a seer revealed the way to them,
Or their own courage drove them to the assault.

Let us note—for always to say “admire” becomes monotonous, although it would be the right word—how Homer introduces us to Andromache as to a living person. That was also Dante’s art. He gives no pictures that we, stepping back, observe, but the things themselves, as if we touched them. How palpable the storms of fate, by which seized Andromache stands close to us! It is to us as if she must become the last of the victims for which the gods had chosen her family. We behold her native city Thebe, the city of Eetion, over whose destroyed walls the mountain forest already lets its branches grow together, while the elms around the king’s burial mound grow silently upward, and the winds long ago blew away the ashes of the funeral pyre, with which the ashes of the seven slaughtered brothers were mixed.

Let us note how Homer does not let Andromache “hurry,” but “run.” She runs to the gate, she runs back, the girl with the child behind her, as if it were permitted to be nowhere else but where her mistress is. And at the same time, the young woman is a princess! She surveys the situation. She thinks that it is more important now to defend the walls than to attack in the open field.

Let us now hear Hector:

Dear wife, I know that as well as you.
But the shame before the men and women of Troy
Drives me down: I must not appear cowardly.
My own courage also forces me to fight.
This only have I learned: at the head of the army

To earn glory for my father and for myself.
For this I know and deep in my heart I feel it:
One day there will be a day when holy Troy
Sinks, and Priam, and Priam's people!

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And the misery of the Trojans does not move me,
Nor the fall of the king and of my mother
And of my brothers and all the brave who
Will then lie in the dust among the enemies,
As much as your misery concerns me, which will then break in,
When by one of the Greek bronze-armored men
You are seized, on the last day of freedom,
You who then in Argos at a foreign loom
Will sit, or forced and reluctantly
Fetch water at the spring Messeis or
Hyperia! And one who sees you there
Tearfully at work may perhaps say:
'That is Hector's wife, who was so brave
When the fight for the city of the Trojans was so hard.'
That he will say perhaps and fill you with new
Sorrow and longing. But I will lie
Long in the darkness of the earth then and will not
Hear how you scream, and see not how they lead you away.

One must know the mixture of tenderness and realism that can be peculiar to soldiers to understand this speech at such a moment. How this man, who appeared almost shyly considerate toward his brother and sister-in-law, strikes down his young wife with such a terrible premonition, only because he believes he must not hide his innermost despair from her. For her, however, it is preferable to share the deepest heartache with her husband than to be unaware of even a single one of his thoughts.

And speaking thus, Hector reached for his child,
But it threw itself around screaming
Against the breast of the maiden, for its father's

Nodding helmet-crest and armor frightened it.
And his dear father and his mother
Laughed, and Hector took off the shining helmet,
Set it down beside him, kissed his child,
Danced it with both hands and called out,
Praying up to Zeus and the other gods:
"Zeus and all you gods! Let this child
Like me one day stand at the front among the Trojans!
Be brave and rule over Ilion!
So that the legend may one day go among the people:
Greater even than his father, when he returns from battle,
Is he, when he brings home the blood-spattered

Precious weapons of his enemies,
And his mother exults!" Speaking thus
He lays the child in his mother's arms,
And she took it to her breathing breast,
Smiling through tears. And seeing this,
He felt pity and said: "Beloved, let
Things not burden your heart too much.
Only what is to happen, happens: no one kills me
To whom eternal fate did not give the command,
Yet to escape fate is destined for no one.
Neither the good nor the evil escapes it,
For it rules from the beginning. Therefore
Go home and look after your household,
Attend to the spindle and loom and keep the maidens
To their work. But for the Trojan men
Let the battle lie at heart and for me most of all,
Ilion's sons and all." And he put
The helmet on again. But his dear wife
Set out for home. Often she stood
Still and looked around for him and wept.
And at home, when the maidens saw her,

They wept and lamented, and Hector was
Still alive! But none believed
That he would ever come home again.

Only when we hear Homer speak in such soft words do we fully grasp the cruelty of his descriptions where he depicts death and murder and ruin. All that lay measured in his soul. His language finds the true expression for whatever it may be. Nowhere does he soften, nowhere does he intensify: he gives what is due to the moment. Homer has no favorite string on which he plays: all are subject to him for equal service. He knows how to bestow the strength that is due to the one as to the other: the thunder of the waves storming against the rock and the soft sobbing of a woman. And so also in characters: he depicts them all with equal love.

Homer's endeavor is to do too little to no phenomenon. He interrupts himself in the flow of speech for the sake of new thoughts and visions that arise from his soul. All have an equal claim to full unfolding: that it may indeed be granted to them!

They require a certain calm to be understood: he creates it for them. Or they have neither the one nor the other to expect, and he passes over them in flight. The degrees of own existence that he accords to things and persons are of very different weight: but he always knows how to adapt his participation to the inner value of what he describes or mentions.

We trust this superior power of the poet. We could not think that Homer would describe something unworthy of his participation or omit something that he would be reproached for having neglected. Light and air he distributes as if nature itself ruled. Nature, which assigns to every creature its measure of color and form and strength and never repeats itself in inexhaustible abundance.

Remarkable is the way he proceeds in building his characters, again in the figure of Andromache. In our canto, he seems to have said everything. But much remained unsaid. His method is to first give the foundation of a character. From then on, he lets individual traits follow that reveal new

details. Traits that force from us the inner confession: only now do we know him fully. Seemingly by chance and in passing, he mentions Andromache again in the eighth canto. There is talk of the four steeds Hector has before his chariot: the Blond, the Radiant-Foot, the Lightning, and the Fire-Fox. Hector, who hoped to win the golden shield of the fleeing Nestor and the armor of the equally fleeing Diomedes, exhorts them with loud, specific calls to perform extraordinary deeds today, and reminds them of the plentiful care that Andromache, the daughter of noble Eetion, had bestowed upon them; she who first poured out sweet wheat for their fodder and gave them wine to drink, to drink to their heart's desire, even before himself, though he be her blooming husband. What an admirable supplement to what is contained in our canto! Now we think we understand the woman for the first time. It was already striking to hear her speak, in the midst of her sorrow, of the manner in which, in her opinion, military action should now be taken.

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She knows the difference between offensive and defensive at the right moment. The nature of Troy's walls is familiar to her, and where the weak spots are. While she works quietly among her maidens, she judges the state of the battle outside. Now we understand why Hector could speak so harshly and yet so tenderly in his soul with her. Andromache was the companion of his martial thoughts. Before the husband, the horses had to have their due. Hector stood by thirsting while the wine was mixed for the animals by his wife.

Let us follow Homer's formative art to its conclusion with Andromache, as we did with Helen.

In the last cantos of the Iliad, those to whom the poet intended to assign the most distinguished roles in the great tragedy emerge fully visible for the first time. Whoever is not named here did not play a part in the higher sense. Whoever stands at the front here belonged to the carriers of the action. Homer wanted to glorify Andromache over Helen here.

She does not see Hector alive again after the farewell at the Scaean gate. In the seventeenth canto, we will hear how Zeus, at the moment when

Hector—arrogant with the feeling of victory—dons the armor of Achilles stolen from Patroclus on the battlefield, pronounces the final judgment:

> “It was not to be that from Patroclus’ shoulders
> You took the weapons! But I will today
> Pour full feeling of strength into your limbs,
> To compensate you, for you shall never
> Return home and Andromache’s hands never
> Loosen these weapons from your limbs!”
> Speaking thus, the Cronide nodded with dark brows.
> And Achilles’ weapons closed tightly
> To Hector’s skin, and Ares’ terrible strength
> Entered into him, and his limbs surged with power.

What a painting: Hector returning home victorious, and Andromache’s white arms lifting Achilles’ armor from his shoulders. Homer calls Andromache “white-armed,” the epithet usually given to Hera, and which, because it is the only one with which Homer adorns Andromache, seems to shine with special brilliance here. But that was never to happen!

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And now the catastrophe in the twenty-second canto.

Following Hector’s orders, Andromache remains in the interior of the house! The terrible deed is already accomplished, and wailing, the Trojan women see Achilles’ team dragging Hector’s corpse across the field, while Andromache, who knows nothing, commands the maidens to set the tripod on the fire to prepare the bath for her husband.

> Foolish one, she knew not how, far from the bath,
> Athene had slain him by the hands of Achilles!
> Now a howl from the citadel struck her ear,
> And she trembled, the shuttle fell to the ground,
> And to the maidens she said: “Two of you
> Shall go with me at once, for what is happening there
> I must know—: my heart beats in my breast
> Up to my mouth, and my knees

Are as if nailed down; alas, disaster threatens
Priam's children! Would that my ear
Heard nothing of it! I fear greatly
That Achilles drove the all-too-bold Hector
Away from the city toward the Greek ships
And has set a sad goal to his courage!
For so he is! He goes forward alone,
Because he is more powerful than all others!"
And like a maenad she stormed away,
With a beating heart. And, the maidens around her,
She came to the citadel where the men crowded densely.
And at the wall she stood, looking around shyly,
And beheld him below, as the steeds dragged him
Away from the city toward the Greek ships!
Then darkness fell upon her eyes.
Backward she collapsed to the ground and breathed no more.
From her head the shining headband sprang
Away, with the veil, Aphrodite's gift,
When helm-fluttered Hector,
Bringing countless precious gifts,
Led her from Eetion's house to his own.
But all around, the wives of his brothers
Held her now, the unconscious one. But when she

Began to breathe again and again awoke,
She spoke lamenting to the Trojan women:
Hector! O woe is me! To a like fate
We grew up! You here in Priam's house,
And in Thebe I, by the woody mountains,
Where Eetion raised me when I was a child,
The ill-fated man me the ill-fated woman!
Would that I had never been born into the world!
Now you descend into the depths of the earth,
Leaving me here in the house as a widow,

And as an orphan the son who is our child!
Never will you be a comfort to him nor he to you!
For if the war spares him, the future brings him
Yet only sorrow and misery every day.
Others will plow away his fields.
The day that makes one an orphan drives away
All companions of youth from the child.
Cowering and cheeks wet with tears,
It goes shyly to the father's old friends,
Holds one by the cloak, and another by the garment,
And pityingly one gives him to drink,
So that his lip, but not his palate, is moistened!
And a flourishing boy pushes him away from the table,
Strikes him and scolds and cries: make your way hence,
For your father does not sit here at the board!
And he flees weeping to his mother.
Astyanax, who on his father's knees,
Always received only the best and most tender,
And, when he grew sleepy over childish play,
Lay in the arms of the nurse and in the soft
Little bed, his soul full of sweet dreams.
Now suffering is your lot and the father's deprivation!
"Ruler of the City," so they call you, because Hector
Alone shielded our towers and walls:
And now by the Greek ships he lies
Naked! And what the dogs left behind,
The worms devour! And of his linen we have
Surely enough in the house, which we ourselves wove!
No! That I will now hurl into the fire,
Useless to you, for you rest no longer upon it!
To your glory all shall go up in flames!

Miserable fantasies, one springing from the other. Hector had stood only before Andromache's eyes, Andromache speaks only of the child and of him.

And how finally the housewife awakens in her and the thought that Hector lies there naked makes her wild, and all her precious linen is now to go up in flames!

Homer in the last book of the Iliad lets Andromache mourn Hector once more. Beside his corpse, which Priam has brought back, she stands with Hecuba and Helen. She speaks first. She does not grasp things more calmly, but more orderly. She views what has happened already historically. Not that he lay as booty for the dogs in the Greek camp fills her soul, but now also the thought of how many Greeks he killed!

Again Andromache's speech here reminds one of Shakespeare, and I seek to bring it into iambic measure.

> You, my husband's youthful corpse!
> And I, your wife! And now already your widow!
> And this your son! Who is the child of us both.
> He will never grow to be a man! For Troy
> Will fall long before! Alas! Your eye
> Watches no more over our women and children!
> Soon they will travel far away in ships.
> And I with them, and the child with me,
> To serve there and for flint-hearted
> Masters to perform hard labor.
> No! Before that a Greek will seize you
> By the little arm and hurl you from our citadel to the depths,
> Because Hector once killed his own son,
> Father or brother! To many Greeks
> Has Hector's fist given the dust for food!
> And your father was not gentle in battle!
> And therefore, the peoples mourn in the city.
> O Hector, unspeakable misery you bring
> To the parents, but to me above all others.
> Dying, you did not reach out from your bed
> Your hand to me; spoke no wise word that I,
> Weeping through the long nights and the days,

Might carry in my heart. —

Let us notice how she addresses now her husband, now her son, and how toward the middle of the speech Hector’s merciless strength and the death he gave his enemies begin to master her! Here she lingers. Here lay comforting images for her heart!

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Already at the first cry at the loom her thoughts took the path to the battlefield: Hector was the one who strode before all! He himself had been filled mostly with concern for his posthumous fame.

This cannot be denied: that Homer let the figures of Hector and Andromache become humanly more visible before us than those of the others.

How artistically he instills in us, without reporting directly, the life story of the woman from her childhood, yet still knows how to shroud her and the child’s future in uncertainty. Homer’s art of creating a rounded biography of his figures from expressions of various kinds, I compare to the art of more recent poets, Dickens in the first instance. In fragmentary communications that permeate Hermann and Dorothea, Goethe imperceptibly carries Hermann’s life story into us, as if we had come to know it from our own experience by living through it. I must return to this again and again. The art of letting the figures gradually emerge in the listener, as Homer possessed it, was unique to him alone, the manner of adding new traits to what is already known, which confirm and expand it. Throughout the entire Iliad we recognize the systematic procedure of an artist mastering his creation. If we wished to change and eliminate, it could only be in the sense that what opposes this method would be declared spurious. But we only rarely come into this position.

Let us review, in contrast to Andromache, what female characters Homer has presented so far. Among the goddesses Hera, Athena, Aphrodite, Thetis. Each one not aging, eternally resting in herself. Radiant, immoderate forms. They nevertheless have a kind of development. In the twenty-fourth book their last appearance is a friendly, kind one. A wistful, almost human

seriousness has seized all the gods there and masters them. Among the mortal women Briseis carries scarcely a glimmer of a particular spiritual existence. Of the wives and daughters left behind at home, none. Helen the first into whose soul we penetrate.

Just as we have come far enough to almost pity her, Homer leads us from Paris's house into that of Hector. Let us well notice what a contrast Andromache's last speech still forms against that of Helen: even at Hector's corpse the daughter of Zeus thinks always only of herself. The hollowness of her existence steps before our soul. Nothing but decoration. At the conclusion of the Iliad, we no longer doubt how Homer judges men and gods. Only from the sixth book onwards, where he lets Hector appear with his wife, do we measure the depth of his feeling. From now on we believe we may distinguish what is the very own ruling of his great soul and what is only the infinitely changing play of the imagination, under whose overflow he creates his poem. In Andromache he embodies for his time the word that Goethe's pen first wrote down: the Eternal-Feminine. The infinite prospect of unlimited good and beauty. He who has recognized what it encloses knows that Homer lived and loved.

To be allowed to have his wife and his child for himself was that which Hector could not entreat from fate. It would have been too much. And one has a feeling as if he and also Andromache were conscious of this. So much happiness was not to be enjoyed to the full. So, humans have felt and feared since humans have lived. Where are the centuries that separate us from these two figures? As if the content of true human existence had ever been thought of otherwise. As if the same fear of its transience had not always been its companion. Deeper the best of our poets would not be able to reach into our hearts than this most ancient one, whose times reach back so far that, when he lived, everything human seemed to have been different. What occurs between Hector and Andromache is the simple keynote to which what the Iliad and Odyssey otherwise contain must be tuned. Even Penelope steps back slightly compared with Andromache. She appears more deliberate, calmer, more dulled by fate; she has become familiar with her pain over long years.

Andromache is like a flower that will hopelessly sink and close when its sun goes down. She foresees this hour. And Hector too knows that it will come. And he had just painted his and Andromache's fate with terrible hardness when a look at their child let them both smile.

At the place in the sixth book where we stand, however, Hector's and Andromache's downfall still lie in the future. At the Scaean gate they have taken leave of one another. Paris, finally now reaching Hector, steps again before our eyes. The contrast of the two brothers is to be utilized here to the dregs for the glorification of Hector. All that Hector had finally demanded of Paris was at least not to let him return to the battle alone. And Paris, despite all lack of punctuality, is nonetheless on the spot. And this least thing which he was capable of performing gladdens Hector so much that in full gratitude he now gives his brother a declaration of honor.

Homer finds a beautiful comparison to depict Paris hurrying after Hector through the streets of Troy.

> Paris, after he had the precious pieces of armor
> Put on, flew hastily out of his house
> Now through the city. Trusting his fleeting feet,
> He stormed along to still reach the brother.
> Just like a steed that, kept in the stall at the manger,
> Breaks loose and stamping across the plain
> Hastens to the river in which it is accustomed to bathe —
> Upright it holds its head, and the manes fly,
> And with joyful pride it hastens over
> Wide fields thither where the horses graze —
> So flew Paris, Priam's son, from the citadel
> Down to the gate, and like the radiant sun
> The weapons gleamed around him as he with hovering foot
> Quickly reached the brother at the spot
> Where he had just spoken with his wife.
> And he said: Dear one, have I let you
> Wait and did not come at the right time?

But Hector replied: No one may,
Who looks upon right and fairness, maintain
That you do not hold your ground in the strife. Yet you lack

Sometimes the desire and you will not; and then it grieves me,
To have to hear how one says dishonorable things
About you among the Trojans, who on your account
Have labor and toil. But let us go.
All that we will put in order later sometime,
If Zeus allows us, for the eternal gods
To set up a mixing bowl here in the palace!
On the day of freedom, when the Greeks
We have driven away from the Trojan land!

With that the book concludes.

One more word about its structure.

Homer lets the natural flow of the narrative have free rein in it for the first time. No breaking off, no sharply accented contrasts, nothing of the breathlessness of the earlier report. Nothing either of the supernaturally unpredictable elements. Only humans who encounter one another. The Athena who rejects the prayers of the Trojans is the temple deity sitting there with stiff knees. For the sixth book the ghostly wild economy of the Olympians does not exist, but only just gods rule in heaven, to whom prayer is made.

Of Achilles, as the power slumbering in the depths, whose reappearance would immediately change everything from the ground up, we saw that he is reminded of only a single time. A mixture of great cast of mind and cruelty exceeding human measure are the basic traits of his nature. Without being despoiled, Andromache’s father is to be buried in royal honors, but her seven brothers are slaughtered by Achilles upon his grave. Homer wants to give us, as if flying past in a flash of lightning, a new image of the inescapable power to which Hector will one day succumb.

Of both pillars of the Iliad, we now know how they think about their fate. Achilles is driven by the consciousness of having to die early, in good and evil feelings, beyond the natural; in Hector we recognize in the same foresight of certain downfall the source of the harrowing mildness with which he seeks to do his duty.

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To this also I want to return once more, how surely Homer transplants us into the populated, magnificent city with alleys and strong gates. The thought may well arise in us during this book that the poet was a Trojan who as a child still played on the stones of the broken walls and heard tell of the immense burning of Ilium and the leading away of the women and children. Who still looked up into the branches of the ancient beech tree at the Scaean gate, which had experienced so much. Homer belongs to those for whom the stones had a voice and who possessed the power to make them audible to others. But we would be deceived if we thought that this gift was limited to Troy. Everywhere he turns, silent nature begins to tell. Touched by him, we still hear today the elms at the burial mound of Eetion whisper. Whisper like the young laurel trees on Raphael's Parnassus in the Camera della Segnatura. If anything proved the connection of the arts, it is Homer. Sometimes we need Raphael, sometimes Beethoven, to explain him.

The fifth book of the Iliad had given us a feeling as if Rubens had created these paintings in imagination-filled hours. A realism filled it with which the harmony of tones hovering above it hardly reconciled us. The sixth book, on the other hand, seems to have blossomed in the spirit of the young Raphael. If we wished to imagine the Andromache of a visual artist, Raphael would be the only one to whom we would entrust her.

Andromache has not been so fortunate within the modern sphere of imagination as Helen. Racine's tragedy gives no image of her character. Cornelius depicted the parting at the Scaean gate in his Iliad paintings. As everywhere, he reimagines things here too. The spouses sit beside one another, Andromache weeping lays her face on Hector's shoulder, while he lifting the child up prays. The nurse kneels before him. We are hardly

reminded of Homer's words. In Cornelius's large representation of the downfall of the city, a Greek lets the child he has seized just fly through the air to hurl it into the abyss, while Andromache lies there as if dead. More alarming than moving.

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A quite modern French painter, M. Rochegrosse, has depicted the same scene in the sense of the latest archaeological realism with many figures. On a narrow staircase that leads along a wall to the citadel, the scene takes place. Andromache, half naked, fights a mad struggle against victory-drunk enemies who, holding her embraced, prevent her from coming to the child's aid. One has the feeling as if a band of bestial Indians had raided Troy.

Finally this.

Hector prays to the gods for his child. The first moving cause of all that happens, however, is to him the unalterable fate present from the beginning. We come to know a power above the Olympians. An original-beginning that masters even them. From book to book, Homer's worldview reveals itself more clearly. I repeat: his manner is — as perhaps Goethe's also was — to let the deepest thoughts at times be perceived only seemingly in passing: the enormous resignation that filled his soul.

In Hector's breast, however, after he has spoken his mind to the woman, hope returns! He sees his son as the future ruler of Ilium. More powerful and more glorious than he himself was. And so also his last words to Paris at the conclusion of the book contain a joyful outlook on times of rest and reconciliation, in which all these storms have passed by and the gods may be thanked for peace.

Seventh Book

Of the first books that now lie behind us, each had a peculiar structure: beginning, first climax, second climax, and finale. The change and the

diversity, which were then nevertheless to be observed, let the poet be recognized who ordered his entire creation in his mind.

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Each new book signified a progress, began with a surprise, and concluded with an expectation. The course of events pressed on. Each had the purpose of unfolding new character traits of the main acting persons.

The sixth book also excited such expectations. Their fulfillment in the seventh, however, fails to appear. The seventh book brings few character traits that would not be dispensable. It does not promote the progress of the action. The narrative has something dragging. The speeches are of indifferent content and without thoughts, the comparisons unexecuted, the situations without invention or consistent with passages that are better found in other parts of the Iliad. Nowhere does the disposition peculiar to the actors emerge, which we until then learned to know as the decisive factor.

The beginning of the seventh book sets in immediately where the sixth left off:

> So spoke Hector, and stepped with his brother
> Now out of the gate, the heart of both full of battle-lust.
> And as to sailors, who for a favorable wind
> Waiting, beat the sea fruitlessly with the oars,
> More and more weary toiling — and then suddenly
> The breeze fills the sail: — so appeared
> Hector and Alexandros to the Trojans.

How splendidly that sounds. We recall that passage of Tacitus where the appearance of the mighty figure of Agrippina on the Cologne bridge newly inspires the discouraged Romans. Who would still, when he reads these first seven verses, insist that Homer must have been a shepherd, or a hunter, or a sailor, or this and that: he was an old soldier, one would most like to maintain here. And yet he was probably nothing but a human being who, wherever he turned his eyes, recognized everywhere in the doing of people with equal force the point by whose correct observation one believes to

recognize the “expert.” Dante also was an expert in this sense. Napoleon, Frederick the Great, and Goethe were so, and few others.

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How even the most skillful imitation, however, cannot bestow this gift upon those who do not possess it by nature, is shown by the further course of the seventh book. As it lies before us, those introductory verses excepted, Homer’s stamp is missing from most parts. We expected the victorious progress of the Trojans refreshed by the reappearance of the brothers, the retreating of the Greeks, the shining forth of Paris (whose *ἀριστεία* Homer seemed to have prepared in the sixth) and new successes of Hector. In imageless, peculiarly accentless verses, however, at first only a resultless duel between Hector and Ajax is reported. The falling night separates them. Among the Greeks there is consultation about the burning of the dead and the entrenchment of the camp. Among the Trojans about the return of Helen. And on the next day follow armistice, burning of the dead, and entrenchment of the Greek camp. I would like to view the seventh book not perhaps as the lesser work of a later poet, but as the work of a rhetorically gifted Homeric scholar, who perhaps had to join existing fragments together. If what thus came about (if I suspect rightly) affords much originally present in detail, it offers, in doubtful arrangement, no substitute for what was lost. The narrative forms a monotonically flowing mass. No moment of inner suspense, nowhere one of those sun-glimpses that otherwise everywhere let the events become transparent, or one of those landscape images that master our imagination. Nothing of the abundance of biographical details in secondary characters. None also of those points of rest, or the sudden leaping from one theater of action to another, or the endeavor to bring us forward by the poet simultaneously holding us back. Rather a lightless-remaining twilight lies over the violent but indifferently told deeds of the Greeks and Trojans. A speech of Nestor’s reaches no conclusion; Hector’s and Ajax’s duel, as said, no decision. The preparations for it contain no compelling reasons to enter into it, and the depiction of the duel is without climax.

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I attempt, in order to grant the two undoubtedly preserved passages of the song their rightful place, to reconstruct its course as it seems to emerge from comparison with the remaining parts of the Iliad. Homer partly indicates the content of the songs in those preceding, and partly refers back to them in those following. It may therefore appear probable that if in the sixth song Athene ungraciously rejected the offerings of the Trojan women, the goddess in the seventh will have proceeded with renewed acts of violence against the Trojans. That the gods took a plentiful share in the battles in the seventh song is shown in the eighth song by Zeus' command to abstain from further interventions. There must have been heavy fighting at the Skamandros: this is proven by the way in which, during the burial of the Greeks, the corpses covering the bank of the river are remembered. Ares had probably taken his revenge on the Greeks here, as was to be expected. Furthermore, we suddenly catch sight of Poseidon among the acting gods. Poseidon's usual seat was not Olympus, but his palace in the depths of the sea described in the thirteenth song. I suspect that Homer, in the lost parts of the seventh song, exploited Poseidon's entry into the action and assigned him his position as a contributing force in the poem. The section concerning Ajax must have been more extensive and beautiful; in place of the thinness now standing out, fullness and rich variety must have prevailed. We may assume that the twice-swelling dramatic intensification of the other songs was not lacking in the seventh either.

The deliberation of the Trojans, at the end of the day, we must think of not within the city, but close before the gate. For Hector would otherwise have met Andromache again in Ilion, which contradicts the economy of the poem. From this point of the seventh song onward, the parts of the genuine poetry then seem to stand more richly together.

The burying of the dead already sounds more Homeric; the building of the wall, on the other hand, perhaps already contains no foreign word anymore, even if much here always seems to be missing. For that the Greeks began the construction without calling upon the gods required, according to Homer's way, a justification. And would indeed have been capable of it. Only on the whole do those parts of the song appear genuine

in which it is told what happened after the battle, with the declining day, had taken a turn unfavorable to the Greeks. I select from what offers itself for these things that which seems to contain the most Homeric verses.

Fortune has not been favorable to the Achaeans. Among the Trojans, Antenor steps forward and makes the proposal to exploit the state of things. He belonged to the elders who admired Helen at the Scaean tower. He had told there of Odysseus and Menelaos. Even then he had been in favor of the surrender of the woman. If one now offered Helen and her treasures to the Greeks, he says, that would now perhaps be accepted. Paris declares himself violently against it. The brought-along riches he would give up and add more from his own, but the woman he would keep for himself. With these proposals the herald Idaios is sent to the Greek princes, who for their part were in deliberation at Agamemnon's ships. Also, he should seek to obtain a day of rest for the burial of the dead.

Here we receive the tidings of new circumstances.

Just as the thought of giving up the expedition and making away was the watchword of a party among the Greeks, to which Thersites' speech had momentarily given the upper hand, so we have to think of a party in Troy that was for Helen's return and which another, standing under Paris' influence, contradicted. Paris did not draw his people over to himself through imposing qualities of character, but he bribed them. He was rich and knew how to appear magnanimous. He understood how to talk. His way was to concede everything and then nevertheless carry through his will. I have the feeling as if in the unabridged version of the seventh song the scene where the return of the queen was now freshly taken up by the Trojans and debated over, had been broader and more violent.

Be that as it may, Homer's way is not to bring the totality of events all at once, but to bring them together fragmentarily. Just as little as at the Scaean gate back then Antenor had said everything he knew, just as little will that concerning the intrigues of Paris have come to be spoken of exhaustively in the seventh now; for again in the eleventh song only do we hear the decisive thing about that stay of Menelaos and Odysseus in the city. At that

time, we learn subsequently in the eleventh, the same Antimachos, in the interest of Paris, had forged the plan to slay Menelaos and Odysseus within Troy, so that a murder would have been the answer to their mission. In the camp of the Greeks one knew that well, for that is precisely why in the eleventh song Agamemnon, now that the two sons of Antimachos came into his power, lets no mercy be granted to them. What a prospect that opens to us of the events before and in Troy, as Homer's fantasy carried them within itself! And how this piece-by-piece emergence of what happened shows again his artistic understanding. Almost every new song contains supplementary matter in this sense, expanding our knowledge of things at the right moment. Thus Homer was permitted to reach back again and again to the past, in that he, as if he had forgotten to tell all sorts of details, lets things receive late growth. Let us remark — as must be pointed out ever anew — how this procedure does not emerge here and there as if it were an accidental one, but how it shows itself as a method. With this overflowing richness of the poet's fantasy, however, a double mistrust must awaken in us against the seventh song, which only rarely reports on the events otherwise than baldly and coolly and scantily.

Let us return to the mission of the heralds to the Greek camp.

From the silence that follows upon the proposals of Idaios in the circle of the Greeks, we recognize how sunken their mood was. Then Diomedes steps forward to give the answer for them all. Diomedes is the embodied spirit of soldierly straightforwardness. He never lets his courage sink. He always harbors the most advantageous view of his own position. Let us remark: before all others, Agamemnon should now have spoken the decisive word, as commander-in-chief and as the most distinguished interested party in the expedition: he says not a word! Did Homer wish to indicate that the question in this campaign was a threefold one: the person of Helen, the riches stolen at the same time with her, and the booty that one would bring home from Troy at all? And would Agamemnon perhaps have liked to negotiate now only on the basis of the two latter points? And would Menelaos, silent like him, have thought the same? Possibly Homer wanted

to indicate this by having Diomedes speak as if this most distinguished gentleman of the army had wanted to prevent such resolutions.

> “Let no one touch the riches of Paris!
> Neither those, nor Helen! Clear it is now,
> And even a child must see it, that for the Trojans
> Doom threatens!”

Diomedes’ short speech is admirable. The offer and negotiation of the Trojans, which the princes had correctly grasped as an expression of consciously condescending love of peace, he interprets as a sign of fear and weakness in the enemy. A roar of applause follows his words. Now Agamemnon speaks at last. How tame and, one might almost say, apologetic are his words. Idaios should hear for himself what answer the Achaeans gave. It sounds almost as if the king wished to make an exception for his person, as if he wanted to give it to be understood that with him alone it would have been possible to speak differently. To burn the dead, he continues, shall gladly be permitted to the Trojans. Let us remark how Homer again grants the king this almost imperceptible characterization only by way of suggestion.

The description of the burning of the corpses among Trojans and Greeks, as the seventh song gives it, cannot fully contain what originally stood there. How Trojans and Greeks meet on the battlefield, how they pick up the fallen on this side and that, weeping, and wash off the blood, how they then throw up the burial mound, had to be described more broadly. To my feeling, details have disappeared here. Surely also where it is told how the Greeks, simultaneously with the burial mound, build the rampart with ditch and palisades that is to protect the camp. I repeat: it had to have been told more clearly in the original poetry how they, under the appearance of covering over their dead, threw up these fortifications “hastily” and, as has already been noted, why they began the undertaking without prayer and sacrifice.

The last verses of the song first show, like the outermost of the beginning, the unclouded clarity of Homeric poetic art again. From

Olympus, from which down the gods observe the growing up of the Greek fortification works, we are transposed into the midst of these. A piece of Greek camp life spreads out around us, which is as new as it is living. We get to know the intercourse of the army with the outside world. The going and coming, the bustle of daily existence.

> And the sun sank, and the mighty work
> Stood completed, and round in the camp slaughtered
> Bulls they and ate at night, and ships
> Came from Lemnos, with wine laden,
> And Agamemnon and Menelaos had
> A thousand measures of drink, and the Achaeans
> Bought thereof. Some brought bronze,
> Iron the others; and bull-hides and living
> Cattle others, or prisoners of war.
>
> And so they ate and drank through the night.
> But Zeus sitting there meditated destruction
> And his thunder resounded. Then horror seized
> All, and upon the earth they poured
> Wine out and not a single one dared to drink,
> Who had not first sacrificed to the son of Kronos.
>
> And then they laid themselves down to sleep.

Not only during the building of the wall, therefore, but also during drinking, a lack of consideration for the gods! There could have been a connection between these two omissions and have been reported upon in the lost parts.

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Let us remark the threatening thundery sultriness that lies over this night. How Zeus sits there sleepless, brooding mischief.

And how the two sons of Atreus carry on their wine trade. Let us remember the reproaches of Thersites. The king and his brother have the provisioning in hand and, as skillful speculators, pile up war booty that flows to them as the purchase price for the wine.

And finally, they all lie there sleeping. Homer's favorite conclusion.

Here for the first time the tent-life of the Greeks is depicted, just as the Trojan existence within the city had long been familiar to us.

The seventh song moves us closer to the moment where the Achaeans will see themselves forced to seek rescue with Achilles. We feel how the lack of a great character around whom they may rally oppresses them. And also, that they no longer feel safe in their ships without wall and ditch shows that their confidence had sunk.

Eighth Book

Over the earth threw the light-yellow-blooming
Veils the Morning, when on high Olympos'
Highest peak Zeus the gods summoned,
And they listened to what he would say.
Let no one speak against me now! he cried,
Whom I catch this time among the fighters
At the side of one, he will extraordinarily
Thundered-down appear up here again! [1]
Him I will seize and into Tartaros' misty
Vapors, as far as the earth's abyss opens up,

[1] Cf. V. 518. Ten years the wounds will need to heal, which he then would strike them.

Hurl down, where the iron gate
behind him closes, as deep as high the heaven
Above the earth vaults: then he will notice,
That I am the strongest of you! Hang a golden
Chain on heaven and all of you on it:
Never would you pull Zeus, the highest Lord,
Down, and if you gave yourselves ever so much trouble.

But if I wanted to pull, then I would pull you,
You and earth and sea upward and would wind
Round Olympos' head the chain,
And the whole company would hang dangling
High in the airs! So far am I above you!
And no one stirred about. Athene
Said after a longer time: that we know indeed,
Father, son of Kronos, highest of all rulers,
That thy strength has no end; know it well!
But for the Greeks we grieve; shall we them
Not in the battle assist, so permit at least
Counsel to them to impart. And said
Smiling with cloud-veiled brow the Father:
Be not afraid, it was not meant badly,
First-born dear child, I am to thee
Kindly minded in my heart. And Zeus harnessed
The bronze-hoofed steeds, the wind-swift fleeting,
Golden-maned ones, and in gold enveloping himself
He took the golden whip, sprang upon the chariot,
Struck and flew between earth and many-starred
Heaven away. And came to the spring-rich
Nourisher of huntable animals, to Mount Ida,
Where to him under the trees' moved peaks
An altar rises; there made the Father of men
And of the Heavenly ones a halt and unharnessed
The steeds, enveloped them in cloud,
Sat himself down on the head of the mountain,
Glad in the feeling of his power, and looked down
Upon the Trojans' city and the ships of the Greeks.

One may remark how brusquely the song begins. Should it seem as if one is mistaken here as far as the words are concerned, the whole attitude of the situation would confirm this perception. The turn from world-shaking bluster of threats to comfortable good-nature is an intended effect. We have met it once already, only less strongly; and we shall see it repeat itself, only more strongly.

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In every direction in which we observe, this ever-stronger becoming of the accents shows itself. At the same time, however, we perceive, returning to our scene, how, proceeding from verse to verse, an ever more serious-becoming grandeur begins to prevail, so that Zeus, when he has finally arrived at the spot, sits there as the true father of gods and men, given over to the glad feeling of almighty majesty. Let us remember the conclusion of the previous song: how Atreus' sons as wine-sellers did brilliant business there: how differently Zeus represents the ruler over everything that is there to be ruled. Irresistible wrath and majestic goodness alternate rapidly in his brow. The immense preponderance allows him to be indulgent. It is the custom today, alongside the Zeus of Otricoli, to view the head on the coin of Elis as the actual representative of the lost work of Phidias. The Zeus of Otricoli, of whom I spoke above already, is for me the only work of art that would be able to give an idea of the effect of the statue in the temple of Olympia. An unfathomable sight. The brow seems to think. Mildness and strength, goodness and the possibility of annihilating lightning-strikes dwell silently side by side in this countenance.

And at the same time Homer, clearly as he lets Zeus appear, pours again a certain indeterminateness over the figure, which increases its greatness. Michelangelo places around the man-creating God-father of his age, whom he painted on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, a garment as if it were woven of flowing mists. Homer says, as Zeus arms himself for the journey to Ida: "he enveloped himself in gold." Voss translates, as Athene also puts on her father's garment, *χιτὼν* with "armor." Far too definite: Zeus requires no armor. To be sure, Homer lends him a helmet, which Athene likewise sets upon her head; that Zeus wears it in battle or has worn it, he does not say. This protection of the head would take away something from his innate invincibility.

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At the same time here now, however, where Zeus' power spreads out before us in irresistible violence, a limitation of the same. Zeus, who has retired into solitude in order to do quite undisturbed only what is his very

own will, yields to the mere sign of a power that is greater than his own. Homer has prepared us for it in his way. Hector comforts Andromache, as he takes leave of her, with the reference to fate, without whose consent no one will kill him. But of the gods as subject to fate the poet does not yet speak there. He lets events and thoughts grow up slowly here too. Now first we see Zeus as one subject to "*Aisa*." Unasked, the Lord of the world inquires of her and carries out what she commands.

Who is *Aisa*? A goddess? From where has she her authority? How is she fashioned? It has been pointed out once already to the fate ruling over the Olympians, which, formless and yet existing personally, would make itself felt. Homer lets the whole fullness of its scope of power first come into appearance at the place where he requires it.

We have seen how with the mortals of Homeric poetry character and rank combine to something that constitutes the sphere of influence of the individual. Not otherwise with the inhabitants of heaven: each is limited by something, only Zeus is not. But even Zeus begins to let himself be governed by whims, and something must be there that balances this wavering. In the moment where Zeus' omnipotence begins to become dubious, Homer shows the stronger hand that also leads him in the rein.

The idea of fate flows from our innate belief in the intervention of a hidden and inexplicable guidance of things. It asserts itself alongside what we revere as world order and providence. Both circle through each other without touching. Fate does what it does without causes and is inexorable. It indicates a connection of the smallest and greatest present above the movement of phenomena comprehensible to us. Acting according to laws that we do not know.

A will coming from somewhere that at the same time terrifies and calms us, and whose relationship to the reigning Lord of the universe we do not strive to fathom. To think of a God who mildly and kindly rules the world, we attempt. We venture upward with our thoughts to the inkling of his personality. Hopes grow for us from such thoughts. To ourselves, in view of eternity, we are indeed only conceivable in a boundless intensification of

our individuality. We believe in the victory of the good and cast from us the fear of evil powers that might be able to impair our way upward. How the belief in a fate is to be united therewith, we do not know. Fate, the once spoken, the irrevocable, presupposes something dead, immovable, which contradicts our best thoughts and which at times nevertheless gains power. It negates the concept of freedom, of choice between good and evil. To Goethe it was hateful. [1]

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[1] Goethe confesses himself in many life situations as a fatalist, but his "Urworte" show rightly how he tried to construct the last things without fate.

Iphigenia succeeds in overcoming fate, Faust knows nothing of a fate, but already the way in which Schiller lets Wallenstein perish of it shows how very much this belief is still living today. Often enough we mean to recognize in trustless moments the places where fate intervenes, and yield silently to its blows without hating it. Our fantasy does not attempt to think of it in personal form. But we attribute to it personal will.

If we take all passages of the Iliad and Odyssey together that speak of fate, we recognize the intention of the poet to be indistinct. Sometimes he seems to want to say that the gods are subject to fate, then again that fate obeys them. Then again the violence of fate is to run alongside that of the gods in such a way that the question of power cannot be raised.

Also Homer, when he personifies fate, leaves uncertain whether a single personality represents it, or two, or three, whom he then calls sisters. In a later song and in the Odyssey, fate spins the thread of life of man. But one sees, as it were, only spinning hands reaching out from a cloud. Of the Parcae, [*the Fates*] Homer knows nothing yet.

In our eighth song, the intervention of fate possesses significant importance.

The ruling of a power over Zeus changes the feeling with which we had finally followed the course of events in a certain growing anxiety. The sight

of a series of grandly conceived human characters being abandoned to the whims of a recklessly amusing company of gods, without moral support and without a fatherland, began to disquiet us. Greeks and Trojans give honest effort to settle their dispute reasonably, and the irrational meddling of the gods systematically prevents this. The negotiations of the last Olympian session show the dispositions of these lords and ladies unveiled. They would indeed have nothing more to do if men lived peacefully and, instead of hating each other, wanted to love each other. They demand destruction and annihilation as their good right. But already they themselves have occasionally admitted how limited even their power is. Now at last we hear that they have to fear not merely their own kind and individual human heroes, but that firm orders rule even over them, which to overturn is impossible even for Zeus. If it stands so, however, then the mortals gain in independence: there is, bypassing the Olympians, a direct instance for them which they may trust when it comes to life and death. Zeus steps out of his position that transcends time and circumstances into that of merely a most high executive official of higher expressions of will.

Zeus therefore looks down from the peak of Ida at the shields and spears clashing below. Lamentations and victory-cries rise up to him sounding into one another. It is still early in the day.

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Until noon, where the sun, growing weary, begins to burn, he lets things draw along so. Now, however, he takes the golden scale, lays black death in both pans, lifts the scale aloft: and deep down sinks the pan of the Greeks! Zeus has his directive. He knew the will of fate beforehand, but nevertheless inquired once more. A lightning bolt descends from Ida and destruction quivers through the Greeks. They stare before them in horror. Agamemnon, Idomeneus, and the two Ajax turn to flight.

Magnificent is the transition to the two heroes now who nevertheless seek to withstand the Trojans in this fearful moment.

> Nestor alone held stand. Forced he did it.
> For Alexandros, Helen’s husband, hit
> One of his steeds right on the forehead, there where

First hair and blaze meet each other
And where a shot works most deadly: it sprang
Painfully struck up and wallowing drew
All into its fall.

What now follows belongs to the most brilliant depictions of Homer.

Nestor attempts to cut through the traces of the horses with his sword as Hector's team comes along. Diomedes notices from afar the danger threatening Nestor and calls to Odysseus, who is engaged in full flight. He, however, despite the mocking words that Diomedes bellows after him, storms past toward the ships. Now Diomedes goes forward alone and succeeds in forcing his way through to Nestor, whom he compels to mount his chariot harnessed with the horses taken from Aeneas, not however to flee with him, but to attack the Trojans. I said that incessant attack is Diomedes' element. None of the Greek heroes is so modest toward the older princes; none goes so unrestrainedly at the enemy. There lies something joyful, always ready for battle, in Diomedes' nature. May what will have happened, he is of good courage. The undispellable cloud of melancholy foreknowledge, the eternal question of being and non-being that envelops Achilles, is lacking in Diomedes.

Fresh morning air surrounds him. The lightning strikes of Zeus do not frighten him. His zest for attack flows over into the veins of old Nestor, whose team is handed over to Diomedes' charioteer. In his place the all-surviving graybeard of Pylos himself takes the reins in hand. So they drive at the storming Hector. Diomedes hurls his lance at him, which, flying past, drives through his charioteer's breast. Looking about for another, Hector must for a time inactively guide the steeds himself, while Diomedes presses forward with such immense strength that now the battle would have been decided to the disadvantage of the Trojans, had Zeus not for the second time sent down his lightnings. Striking right before Diomedes' team, the flame lets the steeds shrink back in terror. Nestor is no longer able to hold the reins and calls upon Diomedes to turn back. Still the latter hesitates. The image rises to him how Hector, in the assembly of the Trojan people, would

call him a coward; Nestor, however, calms him with the thought that, if that happened, no one would believe Hector. Therewith he turns the chariot to flight, and showered by a rain of arrows they fly away, Hector with mocking scorn upon their heels. Thrice is Diomedes on the point of turning back, thrice however Zeus thunders down from Ida, and he does not dare it.

With arrogant words Hector boasts of the help of the son of Kronos, fires up the Trojans, and mocks the wretched wall of the Greeks, over which he would easily leap with his chariot. Now follows the address already mentioned above to his four steeds, whom he reminds how Andromache poured out wheat for them and gave them to drink while he stood thirsting by. In this moment of highest feeling of victory, he remembers his wife! And speaking further to the steeds, he tells them of the golden shield of Nestor, which he will now capture, and of the armor of Diomedes, which Hephaistos forged. So loudly he shouts for joy that Hera on Olympus hears it and, furious over the defeat of the Greeks, begins to speak out to Poseidon.

Thou, before whose violence the earth trembles,
Grieves it thee not in the spirit for the Achaeans,
Who so plentiful sacrifices always brought to thee?
Grant thou to them the victory! If we only wanted,
We would press Zeus back, and he would sit lonely
And abandoned and mourning upon the Ida!

Poseidon however will lend himself to nothing that in the end would only turn out to the ruin of them all.

Let us remark how Homer leads us again and again to the height so that we see the battle in the depth in full extent before us. The fleeing Achaeans have arrived at the rampart, where the chariots and steeds crowd together in confusion, while irresistibly Hector presses forward. [1]

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[1] Verses 216—336 must be omitted here. They seem to have been placed in the wrong spot during the redaction of the songs. They interrupt the narrative, which without them hurries forward in the best flow. They bear

throughout the character of the supplements of the seventh song. They contain passages of importance which, however, compared with identical or similar passages of other songs, appear as lesser in value, so that these passages of other songs do not appear as the borrowed matter. Compare, for example, the two descriptions of how Teucer's bow snaps: by how much more excellent that of the later song appears.

Hera, rejected by Poseidon, turns now to Athene, but she too is afraid to go forward. With bitter words she enumerates all she has done for the sake of her father, especially for Herakles' rescue, when he undertook to fetch the dog of Hades from the underworld. This time Thetis was to blame, who coaxed from him the ruin of the Achaeans. After Athene has thus talked the anger from her soul, she suddenly takes courage. "The time will also come again when he calls me his dear blue-eyed one. Forward, harness thou, while I in Zeus' own chamber put on the weapons! Now we will see whether Hector will rejoice when he suddenly meets me below! Many a Trojan shall now sate the dogs and vultures." This sudden being-deafened of all fear and concern by excessive desire to take part in the fight is extremely understandable.

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Hera, the venerable goddess, the daughter of great Kronos, puts the golden reins on the steeds; Athene, on the other hand, entering her father's house, lets the colorful garment woven by herself fall to the ground and envelops herself, as we saw her do earlier, in Zeus' own battle-garment, mounts the fire-breathing chariot, and grasps the weighty lance. Hera strikes at the steeds — with pleasure we read these repetitions — the cloud-gate of Olympus, which otherwise is the business of the *Horai* [*goddesses of the Seasons*] to open, springs open of itself, and forward flies the team.

Zeus, however, who has seen everything, sends the gold-winged Iris to meet the two with a message that lacks nothing in clarity. Their steeds he would lame, their chariot shatter, the goddesses however hurl into the depth with a lightning bolt, so that ten years would not suffice to heal their wounds. Athene should notice what it meant to fight against her father; at Hera he was less angry, for with her he was already accustomed to such.

Let us remark this familial critique in a moment of highest excitement. Let us remark also how the poet uses the opportunity to individualize Iris here. Iris belonged until then to the deities who, within the Olympian sphere, corresponded in rank approximately to those mortal heralds who have only a name and an often-recurring activity of an incidental kind. Iris' personality has as little to do with the messages she delivers as that of a postman with the content of the letters to be delivered by him. Quite imperceptibly Homer already in the third song lent the goddess the beginnings of an independent character in that she, of her own impulse, makes important communications to the mortals. It was she who, in Laodike's form, called Helen to the wall. It was also Iris who had brought the wounded Aphrodite from the turmoil to Ares and had driven her as charioteer to Olympus. Always, however, she still lacked her own feeling on these occasions. She could count as a graceful embodiment of hurrying readiness to serve.

She subordinates herself too much. We see her on the Trojan side, but not as a partisan. Homer lets her now take a step further.

This is the threat of Zeus, which she had been commissioned to deliver to the two goddesses:

> Lame will I their horses at the chariot,
> And the chariot will I in pieces strike,
> And them themselves out into the depth hurl,
> And ten years shall not suffice,
> To heal their wounds, which my lightning strikes.
> That the blue-eyed one notice what it signifies,
> Against the father to fight! But Hera
> Grieve I less, for that am I accustomed,
> That she against me is, whatever I say.

Iris meets the goddesses still at the gate of Olympos. She repeats Zeus' words. Already thereby she gains an increase in personality, in that she does not simply repeat the speech of the Father of Gods, but gives it in indirect

form, yet more however in that she, from her own plenitude of power, at the conclusion addresses Athene particularly:

> And thou mischief-bringing, thou shameless
> Bitch, daredst truly Zeus opposite
> Thy lance's monster to raise!
> Therewith she flew away, the fleeting Iris.

To these abusive words Iris had not been authorized by Zeus. A truly earthly trait, that she uses the opportunity to tell the daughter of the Master her mind. We shall see how Homer involves Iris more and more in the events. This growing of initially more symbolically lifeless conceptual beings into more mobile deities taking part in the domestic intercourse of the remaining gods we observed elsewhere too. So that Olympus seems gradually to populate itself more densely.

Hera first, when she is alone with Athene, finds language again. The state of things has suddenly become clear to her. And now a fine turn: she acts as if Athene were to blame for everything. "Woe to us," she calls to Athene: "we both will for the sake of mortal men revolt against Zeus? That I do not allow! May down there perish or get away who will. May Zeus between Trojans and Danaans decide."

Athene says nothing. Hera turns the chariot around, the *Horai* unharness the steeds again and give them fodder, the goddesses however sit down deeply troubled upon their golden chairs. Not long, then Zeus also appears. For him Poseidon himself looses the steeds from the chariot, lifts the chariot onto its stand, and envelops it with linen. Zeus, under whose stride Olympus trembles, sits down on the golden throne. Hera and Athene, far off from him and sitting by themselves, dare say or ask nothing. He, however, knows what they think.

"Why are you then so out of humor, Athene and Hera," he addresses them. "You have surely not exerted yourselves too much in the battle to do harm to the Trojans, at whom you are so furious?" And after this ironic question a series of threats as to how it would fare with the gods who acted

against his will now. Athene, who is a mistress in silence, swallows her rage quietly; Hera however seeks to talk her way out. It must surely grieve her that things go badly for the Greeks, and it was surely permitted to give them good advice.

Zeus answers, however, not so good-naturedly as in the morning when Athene made the same objection. Hera would tomorrow experience quite other things! Not sooner should Hector's victory-run halt than until Achilles would rise.

Now a remarkable passage.

Homer, by letting fate decide at the beginning of our song, has, in his way, not said everything. Zeus took the golden scale in hand and obeyed its instruction. Now Homer leads us a step further. In the need to prepare the listener slowly for what is coming, he lends fate speech. He lets it predict the course of things in oracular version. Zeus repeats his words to the gods:

> Not shall rest from fight the strong Hector,
> Ere by the weapons the Pelide rises not
> On that day, when in fearful need
> For the dead Patroklos there is fought.
> That is determined! —

What do we know, in the eighth song here, already of Patroklos? Much had to happen before it came to this "fearful need." All that fate had entrusted to Zeus. Zeus therefore knows what happens, and knows it also not. Homer always reserves for himself the freedom to operate with fairytale-like contradictions.

Again the night makes an end to the battle between Trojans and Greeks. The darkness breaks in: dear to the Trojans, but heartily desired by the Greeks, whose ships immediate danger threatens.

> And Hector assembled the Trojans
> Near by the ships at the river, where open field was
> And the burial-place opened itself to the sight.

There, leaving the teams, they heard him.
And leaning upon the eleven-foot-long lance,
Whose bronze point from afar shone,
Spoke Hector: “Hear me! Now would the Greeks
Together with their ships all have been lost,
Did the night not rescue them. Let us too do
What she commands: loose and fodder the horses,
Fetch from the city what we require for the meal,
Meat and wine and bread, and gather wood,
That the fires until morning burn.
For the Greeks might go off at night:
It shall not, when they mount the ships,
Be made too comfortable for them: arrows and lances
Will we send after them into the backs,
That fresh wounds at home may tell
What it means to engage with Trojans.
Heralds shall through the city cry out,
That the young and the gray-headed elders
From the towers peeping keep watch.
But the women shall in the houses
Fires kindle, and watch shall be kept
That the Greeks do not steal into the city
Since the peoples are distant. So shall it be,
And what seems wholesome to me is now said,
Tomorrow I say the rest. I hope and pray
Now to Zeus and all heavenly powers
To drive out these Greek dogs, whom an evil
Fate led into the land.
Let us ourselves keep watch through the night,

But in the morning be with clatter of weapons
By the ships awakened the slumbering Ares;
And if Diomedes at the wall
To stop me attempts: we shall see

Whether it succeeds for him or whether I his bloody
Weapons capture. Tomorrow he shall prove
Whether he opposite my lance
Stands fast. No, to the first will he belong,
Who lie there, pierced through, he and many more
Early on tomorrow's day! —
And as true as the goal of my wishes were,
Now Athene and Apollo to be,
That immortal existence to me might grow:
So truly brings the tomorrow's day
Doom to the Achaeans!" —
So spoke Hector and the Trojans clamored,
Loosed the sweating horses from the yokes,
Bound them fast with thongs to the chariots,
Each at his own, drove bulls and sheep
Hither from the city and fetched wine and bread,
Brought wood in plenty hither, and there drew
Smoke to heaven upward far over the field.

Let us remark the growing passion in the language of Hector. The clarity with which he paints out what he would do to the Greeks! How, after he has ended, the hatred that consumes him rises anew, and he speaks of the deeds of the next day! Strange it is that he presents himself as one of the immortals. I have given the sense that the verses seem to have. There sounds out the feeling as if he felt himself equal to Apollo and Athene.

And now to the conclusion of the song a, I might say, poetic masterpiece of the highest kind, of which only Homer was capable. He brings, in order to depict the wide field with the watch-fires of the Trojans, a comparison that shows us the nightly sky stretching over it.

And so they sat with high thoughts
Deep in the night, and many fires burned.
And as in heaven, when around the moon's disk
Stars spring forth, and pure and windless
Rests the ether, and all mountains' peaks,
High ridges and gorges become visible,

And the shepherd all the constellations above
Counts, which he knows —: so between the ships of the Greeks
And the bank of the Xanthos burned ten thousand
Fires and shone over to the city.
And at each fifty warriors sitting,
And the steeds, consuming oats and barley,
Waited for the day’s first dawning.

Let us remark how in the fifth, sixth, and eighth songs each time under other conditions is fought by Greeks and Trojans. In the fifth song the gods mixed in eagerly. In the sixth they were missing almost entirely. In the seventh they will probably have been there again with double rage. In the eighth however Zeus scares them back with powerful threats because he alone wants to decide over victory and defeat. We see in the eighth song the events neither from the side of the Greeks, nor the Trojans, but from that of Zeus. He looks down from above, and we do not lose the feeling, like him, of observing things from a bird’s-eye perspective.

In the decorative elements the eighth song surpasses the earlier ones. It is as if the sun shone more glaringly. As if light and shadow bordered more sharply on one another. Upon Greeks and Trojans falls something like thunder-lighting. All the darker then breaks the night in.

Zeus, entirely enveloped in gold, and the brilliance and thunder of his lightnings dominate our fantasy. Homer’s intention to grasp Olympus and Ida in this song as the theater of what happens results also from the fact that he favors them through descriptions. The topography of the super-terrestrial world is now completed. —

The first eight songs of the Iliad form a third of the twenty-four of which the poem consists. Were it a modern novel, I would say it consists of three parts, each of eight chapters, and the first part were now done with. If we remain with this comparison, the first part of the Iliad has its certain functions.

The foremost was to make us acquainted with the scene of action and the players. It has been shown with what art Homer has done this. Proceeding step by step, he always introduces the persons in action and captures our interest for them, as becomes an epic poet, so that each person, as long as we occupy ourselves with him, becomes the main person. For each, the gods included, the beginning of an inner and an outer development is given, which fills us with sympathy. How everything will once end, Homer indicates again and again, but reserves for himself, as sovereign poet, and for us, as sovereign public, the power to conclude the fates in the sense of human freedom.

To this final end of things, I return once more. We have seen how the poet places over the will of the gods a fate whose sphere of power he simultaneously keeps so uncertain that its subordination under Zeus does not seem impossible. Over fate and gods, however, Homer lets the yet higher power of the human will prevail! I point to two passages of the second and the eighth cantos. The first, where Athene prevents the flight of the Greeks. Fate had resolved that they should not flee. Nevertheless, the poet says: “Then the Greeks, contrary to the decrees of fate, would have journeyed home,” if Athene had not prevented it. And in the eighth canto, when Diomedes storming forward had killed the charioteer of Hector and drove the Trojans back, we read: “Then destruction would have occurred and things would have happened, the occurrence of which was an impossibility,” had not Zeus intervened. Obviously, Homer wanted to express, however we may translate the words, that an unrestrainable something, emanating from men, was about to rebel against Zeus and fate. Homer holds fast, despite Zeus and fate, to a power of man to act freely, which can neither be explained by its origin nor described by its conditions, but is nevertheless present.

The second function of this first part of the Iliad is to hold firmly together the interest of the narrative, which splits into many directions.

Given the large number of acting persons and the necessity of explaining each from the nature of the circumstances surrounding them, Homer is

forced to jump incessantly from one to the other. If we take one of Dickens's novels for comparison, we perceive how the beginning of the narrative, corresponding roughly to a third of the whole, consists of a seemingly disconnected series of scenes rushing toward an indefinite goal from ever-different sides. In them, independently of one another, the persons and circumstances develop, from whose confluence later the actual main action gains the strength to move forward in a broad, ever more rapidly flowing stream. No longer in the sequence, as in the first part, are the tributaries going to the main stream the most important thing, but its own windings, which, with increasing haste, from time to time swell up again like lakes and form points of repose. Without this standing still, the listener would fall into a haste that would impair the enjoyment.

Dickens's art consists in working the seemingly unorganically torn beginnings of his novels into one another from the very start with the help of a secret arrangement (which I call architecture), so that the feeling that one is dealing with an ideal whole enters immediately. I have sought to show how Homer proceeds in the first part of the Iliad with this construction of the material that appears torn, the sight of which fills us with aesthetic well-being. But Homer's work appears fully admirable when we compare the Iliad and the Odyssey. The Iliad is the mightier, richer, more flourishing poem, the work built up to a higher degree with hiddenly acting means; the Odyssey is the more easily surveyed product of consciously applied art. Both together afford the inkling of a poetic spirit that has been surpassed by no later one in depth and scope. Neither by Goethe, nor by Shakespeare.

With the ninth canto begins the second part of the Iliad. The poet no longer dwells upon making the characters of the players clear to us, but operates with them as known quantities. He gives, however, until the end of the poem, ever more significant stages of their development and ends at the conclusion of the third part at the point where for all of them this development has reached its goal.

Ninth Book

Already the first verses of the Iliad let decisive events be expected as imminent. Immediately, however, things become complicated. Homer creates new views through new facts and newly entering characters. Our sympathy turns here and there. And so, swelling in a steady increase of interest, the Iliad finally spreads out before our eyes as something that we recognize as a world for itself, moving toward a goal.

At the end of the eighth canto, which concludes the first third of the Iliad, we see the Achaeans in a situation from which no way out seems to offer itself. To the sea the Trojans have pressed them and now want to make flight impossible for them. The gods are against the Greeks, or without power to stand by them. The Trojan watch-fires shine as the prelude to the burning of the ships. Hector, his heart full of hopes of victory and fighting under the visible protection of the highest god, threatens as a destroying power. The Trojan pipes and flutes sound over into the Greek camp.

The secret of the poet is to let us foresee with a feeling of certainty what is imminent, and then to surprise us after all by the way things happen. Homer has almost divided our interest in the course of the poem. We stand on the side of the Greeks and the Trojans. To both we have been brought so close by the acquaintance with excellent men that the downfall of one as of the other people would have to shatter us.

A decided longing, however, we cherish. The intervention of the celestials has become too powerful for us. It confuses us in the judgment of characters. We demand that the real strength of the men and the peoples show itself. It has come to the point that we no longer know whether the strife of the gods against one another or the war of the mortals before Troy is the actual subject matter of the poem.

Homer feels that. For the ninth canto, the Olympians are suddenly as if blown away. It is about the innermost feelings and thoughts of mortals here. Not a word is even whispered to them by gods or goddesses.

Achilles had become almost a stranger to us. Where he was named, Zeus or Thetis came more into consideration concerning him than the purely human aspect of his own individuality. Achilles became for us the plaything of over-powerful figures. Him especially we long to see acting only from the impulses of his nature. What did he begin and think in his solitude? Everywhere in the course of the cantos a development of men has fulfilled itself; he alone remains like a tree in spring covered with just-opening buds, which suddenly stops again and will not stir. We demand that Achilles become more visibly the center of the events that he dominates. For this, first of all, Homer will take care in the second third of his poem.

The first third had shown us Achilles as he was insulted and, eager for revenge, conjured disaster upon his people.

The second third will let him appear in a new form. Frozen in the barriers that his pride had drawn around him, he had become, as it were, prisoner and jailer in one person. Through his refusal to fight, he now loads a guilt upon himself that cannot remain without atonement.

This atonement the last third of the Iliad will then contain. Caught in new revenge, Achilles lets himself once more be carried away beyond what is humanly permitted, and his destruction becomes for us an aesthetic requirement. Linked with his downfall, however, is an inner purification that reconciles us with everything terrible the Iliad contains.

This song of the poem Homer has mapped out for himself.

We do not know how the Iliad grew up in the soul of the poet. All major works of great poets stand there as confessions. We lack the points of reference as to how far this contains the life-confessions of its author. But we may say, as far as the origin of the poem in general is concerned: it contradicts our experiences to think of such a poetry as streaming forth evenly from the soul of a man. It would be impossible to see in the Iliad and Odyssey spiritual creations that grew part upon part into a form predetermined as finished from the beginning. According to our experience, such extensive poems would be unthinkable if they were written down or

spoken from the first to the last verse, as if known in advance, to remain unchangeable in the first version. Rather, it would correspond to our modern experiences that Homer's works formed by fits and starts and unevenly. That they needed a long human life to take their final shape. That parts of their content broke from the poet's soul with youthful impetuosity, others were written with deliberation and in calm progression. That subsequent changes occurred. That improvements were made, things taken away and added. One might not object that such things are not to be proved: for that is precisely what I maintain: that no certain criticism is capable of proving these transformations. [1]

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[1] In consideration here would also come the attempts to recognize the history of the origin of Raphael's works from preparatory sketches and studies.

We have from the various years of Goethe's life the Faust in different forms, and the last revision of the great poem, as it lies before us today, occurred only after Goethe's death. We have Paralipomena to Faust. Revisions for the performance. Plans for the work. We cannot know today in what forms the Iliad first arose for the poet and how it was recited for the first time to the public of its time.

Whether different revisions of the work did not circulate under Homer's eyes and how far he was involved in them. We have different revisions of Götz today, which Goethe alone produced. Every larger stage today will have its Götz arranged for its own needs. How many re-workings of Wallenstein do not exist. These poems have something fluctuating. If we compare these forms with one another, it is impossible to classify them critically purely from such texts. It seems almost impossible to recognize the relationship of the two great revisions of the Nibelungen to each other. Which was the earlier and whether the same poet executed them. Nor whether a Latin original lay at the base. (An opinion to which Wilhelm Grimm held fast.)

We possess today in the Iliad and Odyssey two completed poems. Everyone has the right to think of their origin as he will. But it is also permitted to enjoy them as they lie before us and to describe the nature of this enjoyment. This is my work. Over them hovers the indefinite figure of a man who was called Homer and who is said to have created them.

Why not revere him under this name?

With one of the transitions peculiar to Homer, he leads us in the first verses of the ninth canto from the Trojan into the Greek camp. He had closed the preceding canto with a glorification of the night, whose peace formed a contrast to the thoughts with which the morning was expected. We believed we heard the silent crushing of the fodder by the horses of the Trojans. The shepherd who looks up joyfully to the stars lends the foreground to the quiet landscape. How very much the verses in which poets describe the night belong to their most beautiful. Horace's "Nox erat et coelo fulgebat luna sereno Inter minora sidera" may have originated from Homer's verses. Upon me, these two verses have always made a deep impression. Ovid's description of the last night in Rome is perhaps the only spiritually moving thing he has written.

Goethe's letter from Rome, written in memory of this poem, is the piece that, when the Italian Journey is mentioned, probably occurs to the majority of readers first, and all his verses addressed to the moon are as if endowed with special power. Klaus Groth's "Am Himmel stand der stille Mond" certainly comes to the thoughts of many first when Groth's poems are named. And in whose memory would not Shakespeare's "In such a night?" linger. It requires not many words for a great poet to sing us a song of the moon that entwines us as if with silver threads. Monti's translation of this passage of the Iliad also rises to special solemnity of expression:

> Siccome quando in ciel tersa è la Luna,
> E tremole e vezzose a lei d'intorno
> Sfavillano le stelle, allor che l'aria
> È senza vento, ed allo sguardo tutte
> Si scuoprono le torri e le forreste

O le cime dei monti; immenso e puro
L'etra si spande, gli astri tutti il volto
Rivelano ridenti, e in cor ne gode
L'attonito pastor — —

Homer lends through this moonlight a strangely touching shimmer of reality to the things of that night. That which is happening receives an increase. Almost we think we have experienced it ourselves. The means with which he works are as little to be analyzed as certain simple transitions in the works of great composers, which touch our heart like the echo of a celestial language.

This is the beginning of the ninth canto:

So now the Trojans held their field-watch.
But the Greek princes were gripped by "Terror's"
Cold companion, "cowardly Flight."
As two winds at once stir up the sea,
North and West, both from Thrace at once
Blowing hither, and the wave rises dark,
And seaweed is cast upon the shore:
So was the spirit of the Greeks tossed about.

Let us notice the contrast of the two moods that Homer lets clash here. He operates too often with these contrasts for the intention of their use to be mistaken, and he stands almost alone with this art. It would be natural to look for the like in Dante, whom the need to strengthen his fearful scenes must have led to something similar. I have seldom noticed it in him.

Agamemnon summons the Greek princes to him. But he commands the heralds not to let their voice sound loud, but stepping close to each individual, to name the names. To invite the most noble, the king himself undertakes.

Now they are together. Agamemnon rises. When egoistic, cold natures come to the point of seeing all their interests endangered and themselves in the necessity of making great resolutions, they become moved. Agamemnon

weeps. “As a spring of dark, steep rock-wall black-dripping runs down,” he begins to speak. The gods had shown themselves deceptive. Only flight remained.

All sit for a long time silently there. Then he raises his voice, from whom we expected that he would speak, and also what he would speak, Diomedes.

> Son of Atreus! I have now a word
> To reply to the foolish thing you said.
> No offense. Recently you reproached me for cowardice
> Before all the people: I be
> Spiritless and not made for the fight: Well then,
> All Greeks know indeed, young and old,
> What Zeus granted you and what he did not give you!
> Prestige and honor he gave you with the scepter,
> But what is the highest sign of power,
> Bravery he did not bestow upon you. Say now,
> Which demon whispered to you,
> That we all were so weak and spiritless?
> Flee, if you wish to flee! Close by the seashore
> The ships stand for you indeed, in which you came here.
> But we remain until the city is destroyed!
> Or, if the others also want to go:
> Good, with Sthenelos I remain then alone,
> Until the city sinks, for the gods are for us!

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Let us think of Achilles in Diomedes’ place. What mockery of Agamemnon! What a flood of reproaches. Diomedes, however, as harshly as he expresses himself, always has the service in view. He says nothing unseemly. He strikes down the king, but he does not lose sight of respect for him. Diomedes reminds one of Shakespeare’s Percy. He is the ideal of a soldier.

The princes cheer him. Agamemnon swallows the reproaches. The matter is decided.

A single man was in the assembly who might now still undertake to rehabilitate the king. And he succeeds.

Let us remember how Nestor in the first canto, after Achilles' fearful speech against Agamemnon, when the scepter lay there on the ground and no one knew a way out, how there Nestor takes the word and seeks to mediate. How he interrupted the strife by bringing forward general reflections on youth and age and the like, softly speaking. How he did not succeed then, however, in lulling Achilles' rage to sleep. Now, where Achilles is missing, Nestor is more fortunate. His speech here, too, is a masterpiece. Nestor's eloquence, developing in the Iliad, contains a course of rhetoric for elder statesmen. First he congratulates Diomedes. Then with a gentle nudge he gives him to consider that he is after all only a young man. And then he concludes with the proposal which, among the Greek princes, it seems, never came at the wrong time. Let us hear:

> Son of Tydeus. Brave in war you are.
> And in the council of men one of the best
> Of those who are of your age. Your word no one will
> Censure, as far as it was heard. And you have
> Nothing to take back. Yet your speech
> Lacks the conclusion. — You could be my youngest son.
> Yet your speech is meaningful. And you speak
> Not unseemly with the Greek kings.
> Yet I will, by so many years before you,
> Now bring to an end what you have said,
> And Agamemnon himself will allow it me.

> He is a bad citizen, he is against
> Right and law, he is a man without home,
> Without his own hearth is he, who loves war,
> The terrible war in one's own home!
> But the night is here and it is incumbent on us,
> Now to prepare the meal and on the wall
> All around to distribute watchful posts.

That the younger ones undertake. But, Agamemnon,
Do your part too, you are of kings
The King: arrange for the elders now the meal
As is fitting and as is not against propriety.
Full of wine are your store-chambers,
Which comes from Thrace by ship daily,
Abundance is at your hand and everyone obeys you:
If we then sit together, then you yield to him
Who knows the best to say; for need
We well can a reasonable, noble word,
Since the hostile fires so numerous
And so near to the ships all around glow!
To whom would that be pleasing? This night
Brings the Greeks rescue or ruin.
So the old man. And everyone was in agreement.

Let us notice the Polonius-like quality of the speech. Let us feel the shrewdness with which Nestor, under the mask of the benevolently prattling old gentleman, creates an opportunity for the king to make himself popular again with the princes through a good meal. And how he nevertheless gives him to understand that it is not now the time to play the skinflint. Thersites' speech comes back to our memory, who spoke the opinion of the army insolently. Nestor formulates the general mood not much differently. But he knows how to sugarcoat it with submissive phrases.

Again, we also perceive with what art Homer continues to let the character of Agamemnon emerge as the innermost cause of the misfortune of the Greeks. Almost maliciously he points to the king's weak spots. Should that not have grown on the soil of personal experiences?

Nestor's advice is followed. The younger princes divide themselves into seven bands, occupy the ramparts, kindle fires, and prepare their night-meal. The more noble dine in Agamemnon's tent, and Nestor presides over the consultation that now follows.

With extensive words of praise and assurances of loyalty toward the King, he grants the floor to Agamemnon, but wishes first to express his own opinion. This is, that Agamemnon, by the leading away of Briseis, has provoked Achilles' rightful wrath. He, Nestor, had earnestly warned against it at the time, but Agamemnon would not be advised. One notes with what exquisite politeness Nestor addresses the King, yet how sharply he simultaneously sets forth the facts.

Agamemnon admits to having committed an error. The one Achilles, he says, is worth whole nations. To the thought, however, that the feelings of such a man are not to be appeased here with mere promises, he does not rise. He enumerates the costly goods that are now offered by him to Achilles for reconciliation; already in the manner in which he selects and enumerates them, his sense of possession emerges. He is willing to pay a high price, but every item must be precisely regulated. Agamemnon is miserly. One seems to hear how he tears himself away from each piece, bit by bit. Briseis he mentions very skillfully only in passing. Seven women will I give to Achilles, runs one of his offers, all seven excellent in work, Lesbians, whom I, when Achilles conquered Lesbos, reserved for myself: among them also the daughter of Brises, whom I took away then. And a great oath will I swear, that I return her untouched. If Troy should fall, he adds, Achilles should be allowed to fill a whole ship with bronze and gold, and further take twenty women, from among the most beautiful, from the captives. After the return, however, the choice among his own three daughters shall stand open to him; seven cities he wishes to give him besides, whose advantages and profitability he describes. All this Achilles may regard as his own, yet he should also remember that he, Agamemnon, is so far ahead of him in rank and years that he may therefore well count upon a conciliatory mood.

Nestor receives the King's long speech coolly. As do we also. We doubt that it will have success. Agamemnon should have gone himself or at least sent Menelaus instead.

Nestor selects those among the princes who are to deliver Agamemnon's proposals. As envoys he chooses Odysseus, Ajax, and Achilles' old teacher Phoenix, plus two heralds. He exhorts them to speak powerfully to Achilles. We feel even in this his mistrust in the success of the mission.

The five set out on their way. Praying to Poseidon, they stride through the night along the shore of the sea. It is as if we saw the moonlight playing upon the waves.

For the first time, Homer shows us Achilles again. He prepares for us a wonderful picture.

> And to the tents and ships of the Myrmidons
> They came. And they found Achilles, who his soul
> With sweet-sounding, silver lyre delighted,
> Which he as booty won from Eëtion's city,
> When it by him destroyed was.
> Upon it playing he sang of glorious deeds.
> Opposite him in silence sat Patroclus,
> Waiting, until he with the singing ended.
> Since now they stepped nearer. And ahead
> Strode Odysseus. And so stood they before him.
> And surprised and wondering arose Achilles
> With his lyre from the seat, where he sat, —
> As also Patroclus, when he the men beheld,
> Upright stood — and the hand stretching out he cried:
> Be ye greeted! Come ye as dear visit now,
> Or sends one you, because need of men is,
> As those, who to me, though you have angered me,
> Of the Achaeans all the dearest remain.

Homer performs a kind of miracle with us.

How could we ever have misunderstood Achilles? Everyone will have experienced in life: that there are people whose actions we often do not comprehend, disapprove of, censure, indeed at times curse, to whom one nevertheless always returns anew in thought, and whose personality, when we stand before them again, lets everything fly away that we had in our

hearts against them. Their appearance acts as if numbing. We excuse them, we are delighted, we enjoy their presence.

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Homer seems to say that Odysseus, Ajax, and Phoenix stood there in silence in the half-light for a while, so as not to interrupt Achilles' song. And how they then step forward and he, the lyre in his hands, leaps up! And how he stretches out his hand to greet them! Voss translates that Achilles grasped them both by the hands; so much, however, Homer likely does not say: he lets Achilles only make the movement toward it. We are to feel how immersed in the feeling spinning around him he sat there. Solitary, with the terrible pressure of the longing for revenge, which burdens him like a sickness and which he seeks to appease with song. [1]

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[1] Ancient representations of the scene let Achilles appear here like a sick man.

Anew we say to ourselves that Agamemnon's message will remain unsuccessful.

How utterly different is Achilles' nature from that of the others. Here the mixture of passion and restraint touches us again, which always leaves us in uncertainty with him as to how he will decide in the moment. Homer's language is as a living one too foreign to us for us to understand the finer substance of the words with which Achilles receives the envoys. Do they carry a slightly ironic accent? Do they breathe pure heartiness? We believe we hear that Achilles greeted the friends with obliging friendliness, but not without an echo of condescension. We are tense to see who will now be the first to take the floor. The battle of words must begin. That is always the highest that a poet achieves, that he lets us expect the speech of a man as a revelation of his character.

First, however, formalities are to be fulfilled which the visit of friends imposes. Achilles strides forward toward the inner space of the tent, lets the friends sit down upon armchairs and purple carpets, and turns to Patroclus,

who steps near to him. He bids him bring wine in larger jars and of a stronger kind and set a cup for each,

For the dearest friends have I in the house.

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Achilles himself then moves the table to the fire, on which the meat is cut, and divides and puts it upon the spits, while Patroclus fans the embers anew, which again must first burn down before the spits are placed over them. At Agamemnon's great meal, Homer dispatches all this with few words; here things advance slowly. We always have Achilles and Patroclus before our eyes, who perform their office in silence, and those three, who follow them silently with their gaze. Finally, the meat is done, and the meal begins. At the table Odysseus sits opposite him.

Now eating has been done. Ajax nods to old Phoenix as a sign that Odysseus should speak. Odysseus seizes the full cup and drinks to Achilles. They give each other their hands. Odysseus takes the floor.

We are almost convinced that, whatever he may bring forward, it will have been spoken in vain. But we nevertheless await his speech with tension. It almost reassures us, the certainty with which he immediately knows how to mention Agamemnon's name unconstrainedly.

Hail to thee, son of Peleus. Food and drink
Fail not. Neither in Agamemnon's tent,
Nor here. Distributed is what we require.
Yet after eating and drinking stands our mind not.
Us shake terrifying thoughts.
This or that awaits us: either rescue
Or loss of the ships — if thou dost not strike!
For close by the ships and by the wall
Camp the Trojans and the allied peoples.
And the fires burn along the host.
And upon the black ships will they go.
And it has from the right Zeus with lightnings
To them success prophesied.

Let us notice the art with which Odysseus links to what they have of food and drink before them. And also how he speaks at first in thrusts. Thus had Antenor at the Scaean gate characterized him: he begins like someone searching for the right word and with whom only gradually the speech comes into flow. The way his speech takes has nothing peculiar.

Odysseus, where he has to persuade, does not bring his personality to bear. He lets things speak. He does not wish to carry away, but to convince. In this sense he speaks further. First, he lets Hector appear as the one who will set the ships on fire the next morning. Then he challenges Achilles to rise as the savior of the host. Then he reminds him of the day on which he himself fetched Achilles from his father's house and what his gray-haired father said to him at the departure:

> Child, to thee will Hera and Athena
> Strength bestow, if they will: yet do thou tame
> The haughty mind!

The untamable haughtiness of the boy had already made old Peleus apprehensive: the immortal blood in the veins of the mortal youth. Odysseus, speaking further, passes to the enumeration of the gifts that Agamemnon offers. He, too, is a bit of a businessman in such things. It lay in the character of the Greeks. Yet he, too, seems not to believe that Achilles will let himself be moved from this side. He appeals in the end, in the name of all Greeks, to the magnanimity of Achilles and concludes with the reference to the glory of having struck down Hector, who in mad rage deems himself stronger than all Greeks.

Achilles replies. One feels in his detailed answer the intention to keep himself calm. He wishes, he says, as Odysseus has done, not to speak of his person, but to let the matter speak. He gives a representation of his way of looking at things and proves their necessity from his own character. But in the course of the speech it happens to him as to Hector, when the latter at the end of the eighth book addresses the Trojans; at the point where he wished to be at an end with what was to be said on the matter, the

untamable nature breaks through in him and the hatred against Agamemnon, surpassing every other feeling, breaks wildly forth.

High-born Odysseus, son of Laertes.
Here must a clear word be spoken,
Where not this one and that one grumbles in between;

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To me are the people hateful, who otherwise speak,
Than they are minded. What I shall say,
Think I and shall I think, and that changes
Neither the King, nor another of you.
For what boots it, with words to contend,
If one for ever and always to each other is enemy?
Who in the battle exerts himself and who at home stays,
Who of low birth and who a prince is,
Both make the same final conclusion:
Die must at last, who a lazy fellow was,
And who himself boundlessly exerted.
What lies before me,
Always into new battles me to plunge?
Just as a bird to its young in the nest
Fodder brings, when it anything finds,
Without of its own hunger to think,
So have I nights sleepless on the watch lain,
Bloody days spent and me fought
Your women’s sake! A dozen cities
Have I with ships conquered, and eleven by land:
Trojan cities, whose entire wealth
I to the King fully at the feet laid.
Little has he thereof distributed; the most
Himself kept, but he gave to the princes
Honor and share, without it again to take.
Only alone, of all Achaeans, from me
Has he the woman taken, who to me dear was,
And he has her! May he of her enjoy!

Why lead we war with the Trojans?
Wherefore followed the people the son of Atreus
Hither? Has not Helena's curly hair
All hither drawn? Is the Atridae's
Prerogative, only alone their wives to love?
Or love other mortals also?
May a brave man his own not
Love and for himself have? So have I
That one loved, though my lance also
Her in the war to a slave made.
And from the arms snatched he this gift of honor from me!
And now will he it anew with me try?
Him know I! To him shall I belief lend?
May he, Odysseus, with thee and the other princes
Now consult, how he the fire wards off.
So much was already without me done!

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Have built a rampart, a broad mighty
Trench before it and palisades behind!
Hector however hold those not back!
Formerly ventured he himself not from the walls of Troy
Further away than to the Scaean gate
And to the beech tree: there have I him once set
And hardly came he away! Yet no more fight I
With the divine Hector! Tomorrow draw we
Our ships into the sea and sail homeward.
See wilt thou, if thou wilt and to thee it matters,
Tomorrow by day my ships the Hellespont
With the rowing men therein traverse,
And if to us good passage grants Poseidon,
Are we on the third day in Phthia again.
There is in heap and fullness, what I left behind,
And from here bring I gold and red bronze,
Women and iron with, which I here won.

But the gift of honor, which they to me gave,
Took he overbearingly again back!
Say it to him publicly only, as I it to thee say,
That he to the other Greeks also hateful becomes,
If he one of you deceive would,
Impudent as he is: — me however dares he not
Freely into the eye to look, the dog! To him are
Counsel and deed lost from my side.
The deceiver shall me for the second time
Not with lies more catch. Yet no word more!
Go he whither he will, I hold him not!
From him has Zeus the thoughts long since darkened.
His gifts despise I as him himself,
And if he ten and twenty times more to me offered,
What he possesses and what he win could,
And what all Orchomenos in itself encloses,
And in Egypt Thebes, which more has
Than a city, as far as the wide world is,
Hundred gates it has and from each draw
Twice hundred men with horse and chariot!
Would he the sand of the sea and the dust of the ways
To me offer in pure gold transformed,
All would the insult not outweigh, which he
Upon me brought and which its penance finds!
Of Agamemnon’s daughters will I none,
And if they beautiful as Aphrodite were
And in work Athena surpassed,

Even then not! He seek among the Greeks
For himself one more kingly than me.
When I happily again home arrived am,
Will Peleus for me a spouse find.
Many daughters of princes has the land,
And I choose for me one, who to me suits.

Then will I thereof me rejoice with my wife,
What the gray-haired Peleus acquired of goods.
More is the life to me worth than all treasures
Of Ilion, when it of peace still enjoyed,
Before the Greeks came, more to me worth,
Than Apollo's stone treasury harbors
In mountainous Pytho. Herds are,
Cattle and sheep and horses, to be plundered,
But the breath of life returns not again,
Not as booty back, when it is lost.
To me has the mother told, the silver-footed
Thetis, that to me a twofold death destined be:
If I here with the Trojans fought further,
Would for ever the return to me denied be,
Yet immortal glory for me prepare;
But returned I into the fatherland back,
Would the glory die away, yet the life
Long be, before the arrow of death came.
And so would I the others all advise,
To go away, for Ilion take ye not!
Tell the elders, that my mind persists
As it persisted, that they to save the ships
Something better devise than they themselves thought out.
Phoenix however shall with me pass the night
And with the ships into the dear fatherland
Tomorrow me follow, if it be his will;
For by force will I him not lead away.

Achilles' speech draws us entirely to his side. We see things differently than before. We feel the overpowering nature of the passion that flows through him. The inflicted shame has become a ghost that stands before his eyes day and night.

Why should he not be allowed to sail away? Just now Agamemnon had proposed the same to the Greeks. The King appears to us as a speculator without faith and trust, who from the beginning intended only a raid and

now wishes to bring his goods into safety. Achilles considers Agamemnon's offers to be illusions. We become mistrustful as he.

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As close as we now step to Achilles again, however, so much is he in another direction simultaneously moved further from us. Placed between gods and men, he is unique in his kind. The most beautiful, bravest, most brilliant of all Greeks. And yet no Greek! Between heaven and earth he has a fatherland for himself. His mother the immortal Thetis, his father the ancient mortal Peleus. As a child he is led away. Predatory war in a foreign land is the element in which he grows up. Devoted by nature, self-sacrificing, magnanimous, an undeserved insult strikes him to the heart, and suddenly it becomes clear to him that here his place is not. The thought of his fatherland and of a peaceful existence becomes powerful in him for the first time. The glorious Phthia, which belongs to him, rises before his eyes. He wants to live and die like other men. It touches us to see how this man now may not raise the claim to that which is otherwise granted to everyone else as the natural thing. We say to ourselves what the lot of those be whom heaven through extraordinary gifts raised above the others: solitude and ingratitude.

How simple, indeed peaceful, had Hector's existence run in contrast to Achilles'. To him hours of rest with wife and child had been granted. He has a wife who presides among industrious maidens. Who is his confidante. Achilles knows only of captured female slaves. He speaks now of Briseis. I have not mentioned the passage above because it concerns Achilles and not her herself. He had wanted to make her his queen. It had been his thought, which he, however, confided only to Patroclus. Then he gives her calmly over to the heralds, without granting her a word of farewell. Homer wants to leave these feelings in the dark. Also, what Achilles says now does not enlighten us. Briseis had sunk through the war to a mere thing, to a commodity. Also, again something that would have placed Achilles outside the others: to elevate a captive so high.

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Then he lets her go, and all his affection had been only a play of caprice. Whence should come to this child, grown up among murder and destruction, the calm tenderness that lets life among parents and siblings wake up and ripen?

We feel that Achilles remains the commanding one even toward Patroclus. Patroclus is his friend, but he is silent when Achilles is silent. In the soul of Achilles, the son of a king who has entered the ice period of life and of a nymph, a philosophical overview of human existence has formed. He seeks toward Odysseus to arrive at general propositions. His way of demonstrating has something irrefutable. A certain majesty of thought also fills him. He deems himself also intellectually as belonging to the highest nobility of the immortals. He is condescending. Homer holds fast the extraordinary of his appearance in every word that he lets him say. Achilles is to stand there as a creation whose aberrations are like those of celestial bodies. And so silence follows upon his speech. Ajax and Odysseus feel that this man is not to be rebuilt.

Until Phoenix, his old teacher, then does take the floor.

Phoenix speaks among tears. Linking to the conclusion of the speech of his pupil, whom he himself taught to speak, he asks: if the return home to Phthia then be decided, what he, Phoenix, should still do here alone? Thereupon he begins to tell of himself. How Achilles as an infant child had once been entrusted to him. To teach him to speak and to act had been his commission. “How would it be possible, dear child, now to leave thee?” Even then, he continues, would I stay with thee, if a god took the burden of age from me and made me young again, as I was when I had to leave my fatherland. And now he reports of himself, how he, cursed by his father, once reached Peleus.

Not briefly and urgently, as the moment seems to require, which demands a decision, but with the almost comfortable breadth of a narrative that is meant to fill hours, Phönix presents his fates.

Yet we no longer marvel at Homer's way of leading our thoughts far afield. Enough has already been said about that. Just as Glaukos and Diomedes in the midst of the din of battle communicate their family histories to one another, Homer now lets Phönix present the entanglement of things in the pursuit of which he had to flee from his home. Scenes of a violent kind which, based on Greek customs, are foreign to our feelings. Phönix, by thus apparently letting his own person become the main matter, only wishes to gain a transition in order to speak of Achilles again. To Achilles' earliest childhood he turns back.

Peleus was already ancient at that time when he took Phönix in and installed him as prince of the Dolopians. There Phönix, upon whom the curse rested never to have children of his own, had to grow old himself before Achilles was born, the raising of whom fell to him.

> And so with heartfelt love I have made of thee
> That which thou art, godlike Achilles.
> Always I had to take thee upon my knees
> When thou wast to eat, had to hold the cup
> To thy lips and thou didst moisten
> The garment upon my breast, sputtering out the wine,
> Small as thou wast and helpless, and gladly I suffered it,
> Because I myself was never to have children.
> Made thee my son, so that thou
> Mightest one day preserve me from want in old age.
> Subdue thy high courage, Achilles!
> To be unmerciful does not befit thee!
> Even the gods let themselves be softened,
> Whose power surpasses thine!
> And them prayer and sweet incense are able
> To turn aside, when men entreat them.
> For "Prayer and Repentance" too are daughters of Zeus!
> Wrinkled and squinting they limp along behind "Guilt,"
> Who, lively and fresh, is far ahead of them
> And far across the earth harms mankind.
> But Prayer and Repentance heal the harm.
> He who receives them with awe, the daughters of Zeus,

For him they obtain grace from their father;
But he who defiantly scorns them, him they do not help,
And he falls victim to guilt and must atone for it.

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Phönix' speech does not conclude here. What he has said up to now is only the introduction to what follows. But we interrupt him to speak once more about Achilles' childhood.

In the eighteenth book, thus only in the last third of the Iliad, we learn how things went at Thetis' and Peleus' wedding. Thetis had to be forced by Zeus to wed Peleus. Peleus was particularly dear to the gods. The gods themselves appeared at his wedding. Apollo's stringed play resounded. The weapons of Achilles were then given to the king as a gift. Achilles' team of horses was also a gift of the gods. What could the poet have had in mind with this connection?

Homer leaves it indefinite whether Thetis lived with Peleus or in the depths of the sea with her father, the old man of the sea, who was descended directly from the old dynasty of gods whom Zeus held captive in the depths of the earth. Was some fallen ruling house of his own time hovering before Homer's eyes? So that Achilles would not have belonged to the numerous secondary sons of the reigning Zeus, but through his mother was related to the nobler, older, dethroned race? Should therefore, just as in Hamlet's own veins flowed the blood of those who had committed so many crimes around him, Achilles also carry within him the monstrous intractability and then the sense of transience of the fallen primordial powers? Homer wants to symbolize something with Achilles' wonderful history of origin. His first listeners may still have known it, so that the poet was clear toward them.

Homer, it seems permissible to say, has wanted to embody the fate-forming spirit of the Greek people in Achilles. Everything that is great and that is calamitous in Achilles, we find in the fates of the Greeks as the sources of their successes and their downfall. They succumb to the impossibility of rising above personal feeling in political matters. The poet of the Iliad could not have undertaken such a monstrous work without

thoughts that spanned the past and future of his people. Why should the creator of Achilles not sense Alcibiades and Alexander?

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But I return to the speech of Phönix.

How lovingly Homer has observed the actions of small children. We remember those passages where he lets Andromache speak of Astyanax. How familiar these things are to him. How the “old teacher” speaks from every turn of Phönix. This man has long since given up his office, but he may take liberties. With the shrewdness of an educator who knows the nature of his pupil, he leaves aside the criticism of facts, but seeks to gain space for general considerations that work through their own weight. How thoroughly modern is the story of the three sisters Guilt, Repentance, and Prayer, who are faced on one side by the forgiving God and on the other by sinful man. And how finely Phönix then enters into the matters now at hand and knows how to grasp them from a new side. The breadth with which he speaks belongs to the matter and does not tire. Let us also notice how Phönix’ speech differs from that of Odysseus, who spoke as a practical statesman. If we place Achilles as an orator in the middle between Odysseus and Phönix, it shows how very right Achilles was when he reproaches himself for his inability to lead his cause in public conversation. For what he says at this meeting are the passionate outpourings of an island-thinking youth feeling himself injured. Homer’s listeners had a special understanding for matters concerning public speech. The capacity to say the right thing in intercourse with men was sharply judged. The conversion of thoughts into words was generally treated more carefully by the Greeks than by us, who, even when we speak, seem to speak more for those who will later read the speech in print.

Phönix wanted to move Achilles with general reasons to accept the king’s gifts. Yet he does not want to discuss things merely theoretically, but now shows them from the practical side.

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In the further course of his attempts at persuasion, he brings forward a second narrative. If I just said that Homer turned less to a reading than to a listening public, this narrative provides a new proof of it: it is calculated with an art for the participation of a listening circle that makes it worthy of closer consideration of its formal nature. I communicate its content first as one would give it today in the greatest possible brevity.

Oeneus, the king of the Aetolians, has offered sacrifices to all the gods at the harvest festival, only not to Artemis. The enraged goddess sends into the land a wild boar that devastates the fields and also overwhelms men. Meleager, the son of the king, summons the hunters of the surrounding cities, and they slay the beast. Over the spoils, however, through Artemis' evil will, strife arises, and the people of the Curetes attack the Aetolians. As long as Meleager defends the city of the Aetolians, they are at an advantage. Meleager, however, kills the brother of his mother, who, falling into blind rage, entreats the dwellers of the underworld for the death of her own son. Meleager henceforth keeps away from the battle, and the Curetes storm the city. Then the elders appear, and the priests at the closed doors of his chamber and offer him, if he will save them, a beautiful estate as a prize of honor. Meleager, however, refuses to accept it. He rejects his pleading father, his begging mother, and the sisters, his best friends. Finally, when the city is almost already in the power of the enemy, the pleading words of his beautiful young wife, with whom he kept himself enclosed, move him. Armed he steps forth and drives away the enemies. And now Phönix' moral application: That scorned estate Meleager did not receive now, for he had rejected it and only for the sake of his wife saved the city. Let us hear now how Phönix brings these things forward.

> Once the Aetolians and the Curetes fought
> For the city of Calydon and battled one another,
> And the Aetolians defended from their walls

> Against the enemy, who wanted to storm them.
> But gold-throned Artemis sent
> Calamity to the Aetolians, because Oeneus, the king,

Had not sacrificed to her at the celebration of the harvest:
All the heavenly ones had hecatombs then,
Only she not, the daughter of high Zeus,
Only to her he did not sacrifice, because he forgot it
Or did not heed her. It was his fault!
And the arrow-sending, high goddess
Set upon the king then a monstrous wild boar
In his land, which, wildly devastating the fields
With its tusks, the trees heavy with blossom
Deeply uprooting, hurled them one upon another.
But the king's son, Meleager, called
From the cities round about men equipped for the hunt
With their dogs and slew the beast.
For with few he would not have conquered it,
Which, so monstrous, had already killed many.
But the goddess let about the head and the bristly
Hide of the boar, which they had struck down,
Between the Aetolian people and the Curetes
Strife arise. Now as long as Meleager
Was leader of the Aetolians, it went ill
For the Curetes, and they were unable, as many as they were,
To hold themselves in the field before the walls of the city.
But when Meleager began to be wroth
— As also to others and the most sensible sometimes
Anger causes the heart in the breast to swell —
And he was wroth with his own dear mother —
He rested at home with his beautiful wife,
With Cleopatra, daughter of Euenos
And of Marpessa, who was the daughter of monstrous Idas,
The bravest of his time,
For at Apollo he had drawn the bow,
Because he robbed him of the beautifully walking daughter
And Marpessa the father and mother called
Alcyone, because the mother wept for her,
When she was led away by Phoebus Apollo.
And so he rested with his young wife

Meleager and kept himself far from the battle,
With his mother Althaea he was wroth,
Whose own brother he killed,
And she called the gods against him!
With her hands striking the nourishing earth,

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She called upon Hades and Persephoneia,
Lying upon the ground kneeling, cast forward,
And the tears flowed upon her breasts,
And she entreated the death of her own son,
And in the dark depths of Erebus heard her,
With stony heart, the terrible Erinys!
But hark! from the gates of the city resounded
The din of those storming, and against the towers
The missiles strike, and there pleaded
The Aetolian old men with Meleager,
And the priests of the gods they sent to him,
That he should show himself and save them, and they offered
Him a great gift, if he would come.
There where the land is most fertile, there should he
Take a magnificent estate as his own:
Fifty acres, half beautiful vineyard land
And the other half unplanted
Fields of plowable soil. And him entreated
Oeneus, climbing to the son’s high-situated
Chamber and striking at the door
And kneeling upon the threshold before his son;
And the sisters and also the mother begged.
But then he least of all would! And the companions,
And the truest and dearest of his friends
Sought in vain to persuade him,
Until against his own house the missiles struck
And the Curetes, climbing the towers of the city,
Filled its wide streets with flames.

Then arose Meleager's young
Beautifully-girdled wife and before his soul
She called to him wailing the calamity that broke in.
How the Curetes killed the men!
How they drove away the children and deep-girdled women!
Then the spirit woke up in him!
And putting the shining weapons about him,
He put a stop to the misfortune that was impending.
But the beautiful gift, the heart-rejoicing one,
The Aetolians did not give now: for he turned
Indeed, even so the calamity from their city away. —
But thou, think not so! Not first when the ships
Burn, ward off the enemy! Take the gifts!
And like a god wilt thou appear to the Greeks!
But if thou goest into the battle without gift,
Even victory will grant thee no honor.

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Let us compare Phönix' narrative with the simple state of facts sent ahead above. How artistically Homer emphasizes the situations which afford pictures. How he knows how to let these paintings become visible and to increase them in their sequence. How he arranges the events for this purpose! Let us notice how he operates with contrasts. How he makes individual figures the main persons of the moments he allots to them. How he lets the inner content of the scenes grow. How he uses the landscape to give the various scenes the effective background they need and to produce what I call here the mood. Devastated Aetolia with its woods, grain fields, fruit trees, and vineyards stands before our eyes without the intention appearing anywhere to give a description. The individual moments press in our imagination toward a total effect. Let us notice how Homer lets the storm of the Curetes and their penetration into the city follow close upon the conjuration scene of the queen and the listening of the goddess of vengeance in the depths of the earth: both scenes flow into one another and the din is increased. In small we see the same art active here which we admire in the construction of the Iliad in large. In the oldest poem of the

world we find the model, exemplary for the poetry of the newest day, of a brilliantly told novella. Neither Boccaccio, nor Cervantes, nor any of the newer ones who count as masters, would have lifted out the facts more excitingly and visibly and brought them into connection.

We are surprised by the moral application which Phönix draws for Achilles. For Meleager, he opines, it would have been not so much an advantage as an honor to give in to the pleas of the highest representatives of the people and to receive a national reward as the savior of his native city. Of this he was now deprived. The pleas of his beautiful young wife softened him: now it was in the eyes of the citizens nothing but a whim to which the saving of the city was thanked.

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Had Achilles still been the pupil of Phönix, he would have hardly had anything to oppose to these arguments. For that he would strike in despite everything in the moment of highest danger, he surely felt. The way in which he rejects Phönix is as fine as it bears witness to a magnificent disposition. We shall see how what he says corresponds to the feeling of today and places us with our heart on his side. His high mind lifts him above the wrestling for a fame connected with external advantages. He looks down upon it from a height that raises him almost even above the gods, who in Homer are strongly concerned with the incense of men. And how amiably, but not without an accent of threat, he knows how to express this to his old teacher!

> Phönix, friend and father, there is no need
> Of this honor for me: Zeus allots to me
> What honor still awaits me here
> For the time that breath still lifts my breast,
> And as long as these knees still bear me.
> But do thou consider this now and reflect upon it:
> Trouble not my thoughts with thy complaints and thy wailing
> For the sake of the son of Atreus.
> He who loves him might become hated by me!
> And thou shouldst be enemy to him who is enemy to me.

Let us share rule and honor with one another.
Those men will give answer to the king,
But thou restest with me upon a soft couch,
And when the new day comes, we two shall speak
About staying and departing with one another.
And with a silent nod Achilles
Now gave a sign to Patroclus to order
That one should prepare a warming bed for the old man,
To those a hint to apply themselves to departing.
And Ajax took up the word and said:
Let us go, Odysseus. On this path
Nothing comes to a conclusion. Though it sounds little comforting
What we bring: it must be delivered nonetheless,
For they sit and wait! But Achilles
Has a wild unhuman heart. Him touches
Neither the friendship of those who stand nearest him,
Nor the honor that the people offers him.
All in vain! For the murder of one's own brother

Or of a son there is yet an atonement,
And he who pays the atonement and he who takes it,
Live on quietly next to one another.
But thee the gods have forged too hard!
With thee the friends come to no conclusion.
Thou art ill-disposed! A single woman
We took from thee and offer thee seven of them,
And of the most beautiful, in return and so much else:
Come, be good! — We dwell in one house!
We are friends and guest-friends to thee! We have need
Of thee! Before all Greeks, of thee most of all!
We are of all thy truest friends!

I say "threat." Achilles knows that if a certain boundary be crossed, he loses the reins of his own wild nature from his hand. It is that which made his rage at Agamemnon into a sickness. He warns Phönix of himself, as if it

concerned a third party. Odysseus and Ajax also know this danger, and Patroclus speaks about it in one of the next books. All the more respectable appears Ajax' unreservedness. Odysseus had not permitted himself any judgment on Achilles' behavior in his address; Phönix with a skillful turn more indicated than said what appeared to him the right thing; Ajax is of the stamp of Diomedes. The latter would have spoken more harshly: Ajax, as the older man, softens his scolding words through the heart-winning goodness of his nature. He says angry things with a friendly accent. He is the simple soldier who at last moves Achilles' heart by addressing him as an old comrade in the name of the comrades. Let us also notice how at first he turns to Odysseus and only in the course of the speech to Achilles. Achilles, giving Patroclus the commission, had meant Ajax and Odysseus, to whom he wanted to indicate that they should leave him; Ajax proceeds like Achilles: he addresses Odysseus, but then his feeling overpowers him and turning to Achilles, he says to his face what he has on his heart. And how unoffended Achilles takes Ajax' words and shows him passionately, but not unfriendlily, the impossibility of giving in.

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Ajax, all that thou hast said is to me
As if spoken from my soul. Yet there rises
Again the anger into my brow when I think
Of those two sons of Atreus: how Agamemnon
Treated me before the Greeks like some run-away
Fellow — basely! Go and tell him,
Sooner would I not take up weapons,
Until Hector, striking down the Greeks,
Press to the tents of the Myrmidons
And hurl the brands into my ships!
But I think Hector will reflect
Before he touches my tent and my black ship!

In one of his most beautiful drawings Carstens has represented Achilles as he thus speaks. It is as if sparks flew from his eyes. The thoughtfulness, almost sorrowfulness of the others stands in contrast to the violently moved figure of the youth. It sounds like a threatening plea from Achilles' words

not to throw a brand into his soul himself just now. We feel: not one word more was allowed to fall.

Thus he spoke, and each of them took
There his cup and sprinkled the first drops
To Zeus. Then they went. But Odysseus in the lead.

How much these last lines contain!

And so also the arrival in the tent of the king and the report of Odysseus belong to the great passages of simple description.

And they reached the tents of Agamemnon.
And, the golden cups in their hands,
There sprang up and received them, standing
Here and there, the sons of the Greeks — all spoke —
But before all others took the word
Now Agamemnon, the king. "Now, report,
Fame-crowned Odysseus, how was the answer?
Will he save the ships from destruction?
Or does the anger still sit firm in his soul?"
And Odysseus, who already endured so much,
Gave report to the king: "Supreme Lord!
That one will not dampen the anger in his soul.
Greater wildness possesses him still than before.
Thee and thy gifts he rejects.
With the Greeks mightest thou consult,
How thou shouldst save the ships and the peoples.

Tomorrow he intends to drive home himself.
And the others, he advises me, I should advise,
To depart likewise as he does, for Zeus holds
Savingly over Ilion his hands.
That is all. Let from Ajax to thee
And from the heralds to thee the same be said,
Who heard it. For Phönix he held back,

To carry him with him to the homeland tomorrow,
But only if he will and not by force."
Thus he spoke and no one said a word more.

We feel the annihilating accent. Odysseus permits himself no observations. Thus it may have been when kings received the news of the loss of their army and at the same time of their rule. No word too many and none too few. The same realism in the representation of what occurred that was always the hallmark of Odysseus. Ajax and the two heralds are silent. They have not been asked and would have had nothing to add.

And now we admire how the terrible constraint of this mood is broken, even now, by the one man whose task in life was not to lose courage.

Long they remained mute, the deeply troubled
Sons of the Greeks. But then spoke Diomedes:
"Glorious son of Atreus, ruler of men,
Agamemnon! Better would it have been,
Not with pleas and with ten thousand gifts
To come to the Pelides, who even without that
Was overweening enough, and in whom thou
Hast newly kindled measureless pride in the soul.
Let him go, or let him stay: of him no word more!
Fight he will, when of itself the impulse comes to him,
Or the gods drive him to the battle.
But do you take things as I take them.
Let us strengthen our hearts with food and drink,
For in bread and in wine lies the strength,
And when the morning breaks, we go forth
All on foot and with chariots, and it fulfills
But one thing in each: to be the first in the fight."
Thus he spoke, and the kings shouted
Applause to the knightly Diomedes,
Went and laid themselves down to rest.

Homer lets the youngest among the princes say the best thing. Diomedes had purified the mood at the beginning of the book. With the simple words of a man whose heart is in the right place, he again respectfully but sharply attacks the king. One of the decisive points for the judgment of Diomedes as a work of art is the feeling we gain toward him: that he restricts himself in what he says. There remains a strong residue of what he keeps silent. If we compare all of Diomedes' utterances within the scope of the Iliad: he always seems to have said more than his words touch upon. They always sound correct. He speaks as Odysseus might have spoken when he was young. In this too they are alike, that Odysseus never loses courage, which indeed provides the keynote for the Odyssey.

Now, in the tent of Agamemnon, all were silent when Diomedes had spoken, for what would there have been yet to say? Again his words had worked liberatingly. Something like a frame is bestowed upon the ninth book by Diomedes: an element outwardly enclosing the facts, the absence of which would likely hardly be felt from the matter itself, but which, once given by the poet, now appears indispensable. Homer likes to let the conclusions of his books return thus to the beginnings. At the same time, he here again closes the book with the general rest to which the players abandon themselves. This applies also to Achilles, whom he lets go to bed along with Patroclus and Phönix after the departure of the embassy.

Until the morning, however, on which the battle for the ships is now to begin, it is still a long way. The next, tenth book as well is still filled with things that occur during this night. —

If we survey the ninth book, the closed nature of the action strikes us. We have no first and second part of the composition, but a center with entrance and exit. Also, different main persons do not appear who make room for one another after they have stood for a time in the first place.

In the ninth book, Achilles towers above all the others. The preponderance of this wonderful youth appears so undisputed that we let it pass as something natural. Each of his movements, each of his words has a higher content. From him the light goes forth. Upon the others falls a slight

shadow. Achilles is the nobler one. Wherever he appears, the eyes are directed toward him, regardless of whether what he does and says finds our approval. His actions and words and experiences are at once human and superhuman.

But now I say still this. Men who with monstrous spiritual power raise up peoples or press them to the ground have been experienced, and also in Homer's times or in the memories of his days they may have had a place: but an Achilles, as the Iliad gives him, is a creation of the imagination. Homer's presentation of Achilles and the carrying out of his character form one of the most magnificent proofs that poetic creation does not consist in the imitation of what everyone can see, but springs from an extraordinary power of the spirit and sublime inner intuitions which, clothed with the forms of the commonly visible, let human existence appear in superhuman splendor.

But still other considerations are to be raised concerning the structure of this book. The outward movement recedes in the ninth book. Negotiations fill it out, which are not merely preparation or accompaniment or points of rest for outward movement, but seize us as an exchange of thoughts. Purely spiritual battles present themselves, sustained only by the revealing characters to whom the poet wished to permit a share in this spiritual wrestling. To Patroclus, whom we shall very soon see intervening in a grand manner, the word is here denied. Menelaus remains silent. Phönix, on the other hand, who, like Thersites, enters into action only once in the scope of the Iliad, [1] unfolds himself in extensive expositions.

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[1] Where he is otherwise named, he is a secondary person.

Among the limited number of these players, Achilles takes the first place. After him the second, Odysseus. The third, Phönix. In the second rank stand Agamemnon, Ajax, Nestor, and Diomedes. Between Achilles, Odysseus, Phönix, and Ajax runs the main action. Agamemnon and Diomedes speak in the entrance and exit. Twice the scene changes.

The introduction is formed by the confession of Agamemnon, the choice and the departure of the embassy. Then the main action: the vainly attempted persuasion. Then the report of the embassy and the concluding speech of Diomedes. I would not know what these three scenes lacked for one to deny them, taken as a whole, the rank of a tragedy. Old men, youths, and men hold the first roles. It might be asked whether the figure of Phönix was not inserted here for the reason that the poet had aesthetic need of him. Without preparation, the speeches could be taken out of the book in order, to make up a drama, which, though simple, is in this form already capable of the stage, the action of which moved us and led to a tragic conclusion. To a "farewell" as in Goethe's Iphigenia or a "Hélas" as in Racine's Berenice. This drama would be capable in its representation of passionate movement. It would let the characters emerge even more vividly than the mere recitation of the ninth book. It would nonetheless preserve the properties that are to be demanded of the ninth book as an integrating part of the Iliad.

The content of the tragedy is the moral sickness that clasps Achilles and keeps him from the battle. The Philoctetes of Sophocles has also come into my thoughts here, where the turn lies in the impossibility of bringing Neoptolemus to a lie. In what takes place in the tent of Achilles between him and the envoys of Agamemnon, the decisive point lies in Achilles' inability to overcome himself. We shall also see the twenty-fourth book of the Iliad rise to the form of the decisive dialogue of a tragedy, the turn of which lies in the fact that the same demand to overcome himself approaches Achilles, and that he this time gives way to it. [1]

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[1] Aeschylus has made the content of the ninth book into a tragedy which we no longer possess. There are also vase paintings which represent the visit of the heroes to Achilles. Brunn has assumed these compositions to be in connection not with Homer, but with the lost tragedy of Aeschylus. In my book there is no talk of Homer's relationship to the Greek poets and formative artists coming after him, but I treat only of Homer's significance for our present time, which is perhaps able to understand him more impartially than were the Athenian tragedians, who used his fantasies for their own time. To us today Homer is a poet hovering timelessly in the realm of literature. On the other hand, I emphasize, as far as the tragedy

lying hidden in the ninth book is concerned, that I assume for all artistic form primordial traditions, inexplicable as language and the framing of thoughts. Toward them our criticism gets no further than with the history of the human spirit, which can be well felt as the product of rising, gradually increasing capacities from a lower organization, but cannot be proven, but which appears to me as a creation whose stages of progress remain veiled like its origin.

Those vase paintings represent Odysseus almost as the main person. His habitus manifests a certain superiority. He is the experienced older man who talks to the younger one. Achilles, veiled from head to foot in raiment, offers the sight of a suffering youth sunk in pain. Aeschylus may have conceived him so. In Homer, the suppressed passion finally breaking out fully is the main matter. Thus Carstens represented him.

Did Homer already know tragedies whose form he used for the ninth book? Or did the book shape itself unconsciously for the poet into a form that later centuries first developed? I ask without wishing thereby to raise a scientific question.

The form of tragedy and its spiritual presuppositions let the epos appear as a simpler form. Tragedy presents itself as a result of finer civilization. The epos lets itself be united with solitary enjoying listeners or readers who only want to hear. Tragedy demands a more compact public, not merely receiving but also criticizing, which wants to have something before its eyes. In the epos, the events, even if they were represented as simultaneous, lie in the past. In tragedy, the poet and actor deceive us into accepting the origin of things as the present. [1]

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[1] In this, painting also surpasses sculpture as an artistic means. The painter shows the figures as fellow-livers, as it were, even when he represents the past; the sculptor as the deceased, as it were, even when he forms those still living in bronze or marble. I do not carry out these thoughts further now.

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Tragedy forces us to participate in the production of events as fellow-livers. It presupposes a public to whom the mere perception of what can no longer be changed offers too little charm. It wants to wait along for what terrible thing occurs. We wish to be present. Tragedy indicates a refinement of aesthetic enjoyment. We do not learn that someone has been murdered, we hear the last cry of anguish that he emits.

Homer did not want, in this important book, merely to report what had been said, but—as if he let us secretly steal into the tent of Achilles with him—to let us hear Achilles' voice and the voice of those who seek in vain to persuade him.

The heightening of the demands that Homer made upon himself let him, perhaps unconsciously, arrive at the higher art form. But perhaps also a more demanding public already surrounded him, whose attention he wished to stimulate through the transition to drama. —

A world of experiences and thoughts must have lain behind Homer. Of which we do not know the origin and scope. Of which he represents perhaps the last bloom. As Goethe with us, Voltaire with the French, and Cicero and Virgil with the Italian people designate the conclusion of epochs.

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Afterword

— siam con quel Greco,

Che le Muse lattâr più ch'altri mai

I shall come in the second part to the opinions of those who have assigned Homer his place within world literature. Let these discussions be anticipated here only in reference to Goethe. Goethe changed in his views.

In the middle of his career, the thoughts destroying Homer's Iliad as a literary unity gained mastery over him. Almost at the conclusion of his inner development, however, he took up the word once more—in the year 1826—to express publicly that concerning Homer, the initial, most personal feelings had never been extinguished. [1]

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[1] Utterances of the same content which Goethe made even later in confidential intercourse, in Eckermann.

He writes:

Homer Once More

1826

There exists among men quite a variety of conflict, which ever develops anew from the different, opposed, irreconcilable modes of thought and sense. If one side now steps forward particularly, gains mastery of the multitude, and triumphs to the degree that the opposed must withdraw into the narrow and for the moment hide in silence, then one calls that preponderance the Zeitgeist, which then for a time holds its sway.

In the earlier centuries, it can be noticed that such a particular world-view and its practical consequences maintained itself very long, knew how to determine and confirm whole peoples and many years of customs; more recently, however, there results a greater versatility of this phenomenon, and it becomes gradually possible that two opposites can step forward at the same time and hold the balance with one another, and we regard this as the most desirable phenomenon.

Thus, for example, in the judgment of ancient writers, we have hardly raised ourselves to the highest degree of mastery in sorting and separating, when immediately a new generation appears, which, making uniting and mediating a dear duty, again friendlily compels us—after we have for some time, and indeed not entirely by will, imagined Homer as something joined together, stringed together from several elements—to imagine him as a

magnificent unity, and the poems handed down under his name as creatures of God sprung from a single poetic mind. And this then happens also in the Zeitgeist, not by agreement, nor handed down, but *proprio motu*, which manifests itself manifoldly under different climes.

Goethe.

Still, this I notice.

When I compare the passages of the Iliad given by me in excerpt with Voss's translation, and especially when I read these aloud to myself, the musical element asserts itself in Voss, which lies in the full addition of the gently flowing adjectives, mostly omitted by me. On the other hand, however, in my excerpts the characters emerge in clearer lines and lose the sometimes almost blurred appearance which they receive in Voss through the common possession of ornamentally working, often recurring decorative words.

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But Voss is not to be dispensed with for those who wish to take a living interest in my work. This German poem is, among all translations of Homer as far as I have become acquainted with them, the most beautiful, I would say, the most national. Equipped with the fine linguistic feeling of the 18th century, Voss has newly coined a true treasure of German words and turns of phrase from Homeric gold, which in part have already today become so familiar to our ear and our lips that we, like the great abundance of Lutheran-biblical linguistic creations, regard them as having flowed from the unconsciously further-developing spirit of the German language.

Gries (Bolzano), in April 1890.

Second Part. Tenth to Last Book

It seems to me as if humanity today feels oppressed by the mass of history that it condemns itself to drag along. Value is attached to the knowledge of mere facts, the utility of which for the expansion of our spiritual horizon no one perceives. Recent history and the reporting of what has occurred teach us what a problematic concept a “fact” is. What draws me again and again to Tacitus is not the factual content of his reports, but his gift for tracing the individual case back to the universally human and giving his representation such a monumental form that individual sentences become like content-rich inscriptions enclosing long chains of thought. This gift was also possessed by Ranke. Also Machiavelli. And so Carlyle, who as the historian of the French Revolution sensed the mounting moods under whose dominion Paris stood and which shaped events. Emerson possessed it in the highest degree, little as he seems to belong among historians. Only the historian who is at once a philosophical artist is of use—one who carries within him a vision of the overall course of events and the cooperation of men and uses the material accordingly. In the future, with the ever more massive increase of significant men, the question will have to be: which men? I believe: those first in whose actions the unchangeable qualities of human nature are most clearly recognizable as the motives for acting. Even today we do not know the conditions of the ordinary average existence of the masses in earlier epochs as we do those of the time in which we live: the more this average existence of mortals shapes itself as something entirely new in the future, the less understandable will the earlier centuries appear in regard to transitory relationships. The Duke of St. Simon makes us from year to year a seemingly intimate confidant of what happened under Louis XIV.

How completely we lack the feeling of the air that blew then. We shall never learn what occurred as St. Simon himself knew it. For Ranke, these things perhaps had the strongest charm. One thinks he must have lived before and two centuries ago listened to the conversation of courtiers in the halls and chambers of the Palace of Versailles. What actually filled this world, however, Molière reveals. Without him, it would be a great masquerade of ghosts. He alone saw the purely human—that which lived

and that which offered only empty appearance. That, on the other hand, of which St. Simon speaks as moving all of Paris and Versailles, or the things that, playing out in secret, shook him as the possessor of what were in his view magnificent class privileges, is a matter of indifference to us today. When Louis XIV placed his illegitimate sons in the highest positions, it was most offensive to St. Simon that he and those of his rank were thereby impaired in their position to the throne. As intruders into the ranks of the dukes, the king's bastards were hateful to him. That they were illegitimate half-siblings of the actual legitimate descendants stood only in the second line for St. Simon. We today lack the feeling for this. We look for the simple operations of hatred and friendship, of betrayal and loyalty in his writings. Only the actions and sufferings of humanly outstanding men will be highlighted in the future, as we want to see figures who lived and worked. The biographical representation and mythologizing of these men will progress ever further, and finally myth and apparent reality will become one. Then historiography and poetry will coincide. I have a feeling as if Homer lived in a time when things already stood thus once, even if under different circumstances, so that while he presents and lets act nothing but births of his imagination, he simultaneously wrote exact history. Homer's figures are the historical representatives of an earlier Greek world unknown to us in its common average existence.

So too the players of the Nibelungenlied represent the earlier existence of the German people before the Staufers. The characters and events developing here show how the people thought, while our written Latin sources contain what the Roman educated clergy observed in men. Hence the permanence in the Iliad and the Nibelungen. I believe that the beginning new world will have to draw its historical views more and more from the great works of art. Those people and events whose having-been results only as the product of welded-together notes will never lose the shadow-like quality that spreads over them after their death. Some recent historical works remind one of the Homeric Hades. The figures slide through one another like sharp-cut silhouettes. In the feeling of their equal-privileged nothingness, one counts as much as the other. They talk, but in a toneless

language. They have a consciousness of what they have been, but are it no longer and are nonetheless still there.

The works of our living historians correspond to the needs of the generation still living. I believe the historians of the race of future world inhabitants beginning today will one day represent the path traversed by humanity in a less winding manner. Dazzled by the apparent diversity of crowding individualities, one sees things today more glaringly, more agitatedly, more confusedly than they were. Just as our painters depict events more colorfully than they have been. The centuries passed more colorlessly. What happened repeated itself in indifferent similarity of scenes. How monotonous and finished Chodowiecki's contemporary plates show the Frederician time in contrast to Menzel's woodcuts, etchings, and paintings. Today all that glitters and shimmers. The thoughts, too, were simpler than they seem today. Let us see how stationary the fundamental thoughts of the Roman Church have remained; how they form the old keynote for the views of populations that have remained no less the same; how simply the Germanic thoughts of the Reformation still confront them.

To follow these two elements already grants knowledge of world history in the large. The solidarity of the moral convictions of all men is today the church connecting us all. We search more passionately than ever for a visible expression of this community. All truly serious strivings of the masses know only this one goal. The separation of nations already no longer exists here. We feel that toward the ethical world-view no national difference prevails. We would all sacrifice ourselves for our fatherland; but we are far from longing for or bringing about the moment where this might happen through war. The assurance that keeping peace is the holiest wish of us all is no lie. "Peace on earth and goodwill to men" permeates us. The inhabitants of our planet, taken all together as a unity, are filled by an all-understandable fine feeling which even the rudest peoples sense and which they are shy to violate. The people of today grant to every individual the right of individual self-determination in spiritual matters. Even wild human creatures let themselves be guided to this thought. Men as a totality recognize themselves as subject to an invisible court of justice, as if

enthroned in the clouds, before which not to be allowed to stand they regard as a misfortune, and to whose judicial procedure they seek to adapt their inner quarrels. With anxious endeavor they seek their right here. How the French of today strive to present the war against Germany, which they intend, as a moral demand whose recognition they demand from other peoples, yes, from the Germans themselves. I have the feeling as if Homer's goal was to grasp the struggle of the peoples before Troy as if this movement lying in the uttermost past once encompassed a wealth of nations whose moral consciousness was a common one and within which the struggle for the leading position took place. They resemble our epoch in this. Not outward accidental force or accidental protection of divine powers, but the justification granted by character gives the decision in the Iliad.

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In contrast to the heroes of the Nibelungen, those of Homer fight reluctantly. Peace is the natural state. They feel the struggle as a burden laid upon them. They prefer to rest. They long for home. Peaceful existence beckons to them enchantingly from afar, but the gods lash them into the struggle. It seems to me as if Homer placed war and peace opposite one another as Max Piccolomini beheld them in Schiller. We expect today a poet who will perform the service for humanity that Homer once performed for his peoples. In the enjoyment of his poetry, the Greeks found themselves peacefully together. The Olympic Games were the recognition of the golden days of peace that did not cease even in war. Homer created the Greek cultural unity striving for beauty, Dante the Italian, Shakespeare that of the peoples of Germanic blood, Goethe and Schiller the German. We expect still higher benefits from poets. To all men today, the gladdest tidings would be that a man had arisen whose words were understandable to all peoples, who depicted the characters now standing in the struggle for existence in the harmony of a new language, as Homer did for the Greeks. Homer certainly achieved that. The peaceful union of the ancient peoples rests upon his shoulders. The veneration they paid him stands without further example. Neither Dante, nor Shakespeare, nor Goethe and Schiller have accomplished anything so effective. It is as if before Homer only a single

gloomy season reigned and he separated the times and for the first time let spring and summer be.

From all this, only an echo resounds to us from his verses, of course. To us, Homer cannot be what he was to those times. But so great a power works on, even when it has fulfilled its main task. My own experience with Homer sets me in astonishment as something inexplicable. In the course of my life, I have become acquainted with the creations of the imagination produced by the German formative artists and poets and those of other peoples. These creations, including those of the most recent time, have often made an impression on me in the first surprise of getting to know them that did not hold up later, so that in the retrospect of all these wandered-through literatures only a limited number of authors have remained whom I would still like to read again and again.

None of these works, however, has fixed itself in me like Homer's songs. The actual reason for this power emanating from Homer I do not know how to name. But it seems that very many have felt it as strongly as I. If one wished to collect the confessions of this kind that have been preserved, a great series of admissions would come together. Homer surpasses in inner power Dante, Shakespeare, Schiller, Goethe. The figures engrave themselves deeper and more luminously. They have something of the color-power of stained-glass windows. Achilles is more immediately present to me than Faust and Hamlet. This success is all the more mysterious as the language of Homer cannot ring in my ear as it once did for those for whom he composed. For so many of his verses one feels: that was composed only for the day on which it was first heard by the people, and a few decades later perhaps it was already obsolete. Just as the oldest form of the King of Thule sounded obsolete to Goethe himself in later years. Then old people in Ionia may have said: Yes, when we were young, Homer sang that differently! Who knows the secrets of a language? The Greek, the Latin, French, and Italian, with which I grew up, are not nearly so familiar to me despite all fluency as the German. Only in this does the sound of many words awaken the endless perspectives, as if it were an infinite work to exhaust their sense. Only in it does the word become spirit. And yet,

alongside our German works, this power of the imaginative creations of a foreign people and a time that lies halfway outside our historical beginnings! Something personal sticks in these poems, which makes one believe mostly in Homer's personality, so passionately denied today, as in a man whose own deepest feelings lie in the Iliad and Odyssey.

Herewith I close what was to be said in the way of introductory words to this second part of my book on Homer's Iliad.

Tenth Book

Homer had in the ninth book made Achilles' moral sickness the center of events again with such powerful strokes that in the tenth book we expect with certainty the decisive facts that will bring Achilles into conflict with himself and, to put it modernly, to reason. Everything that is to come has indeed been indicated often enough already by Homer. A moment will occur where Achilles can no longer endure the restraint. We expect this self-liberation. It must emerge from monstrous inner struggles preceded by outward struggle. Homer, however, has to promote the development of too many characters equally to allow himself to give even Achilles the preference here. The poet reserves the freedom to regulate the course of occurrences in a broad river. It is striking how Homer sometimes, when he appears inclined to give individual characters the preference of more detailed treatment, chooses those who challenge our interest less—yes, those whom the poet does not even personally favor. Why? Does his sense of justice drive him to treat quite exactly the personalities who, just because he did not like them, might have complained of having been dismissed with unfair brevity? Homer in the tenth book, lets Achilles step back entirely again and turns to Agamemnon and Menelaus. Reasons of various kinds could be decisive for him in the poetic treatment of these two figures: I believe I recognize that he let Menelaus and Agamemnon emerge technically differently than the others. In the course of my observations, I

shall return more often to this technical aspect because it bears witness to the diversity of artistic means that stood at Homer's disposal.

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The activity of Agamemnon in the events that make up the content of the Iliad is, I repeat, more thoroughly motivated by Homer than our present participation in the personality of the king requires. If we add up what the twenty-four books contain about him, the space these verses occupy appears relatively large. The Greeks had a different interest in this character than we do. Perhaps Agamemnon as the incarnation of legitimate rule appeared more important, more significant to the ancient peoples. Times bear a changing interest toward such figures. In the Nibelungen, this role of a king is repeated who, only because he is king, occupies a significant position above the others. Agamemnon in his relationship to the other princes of the Greek army has a similarity to King Gunther. It rests not on a dependence of the Nibelungen poet upon Homer, but on a similarity of the views lying in the times. The cold, egoistic natural disposition of both kings finds in their peculiar rank-relationship both excuse and uninterrupted incentive to emerge anew. Where things depend on the Yes and No of the highest power, the bearers of this power will with a certain necessity unfold themselves everywhere in poetry like Agamemnon and Gunther. The repulsive impression they make was intended by the two poets, who needed such characters for their compositions. Without Agamemnon's activity, the whole of the Iliad would have possessed no complete balance.

But now let us also take the following into consideration. The supreme army leader of the Greeks was a free production of Homer; as soon as the latter had once created the king, however, and let him intervene according to his nature, Agamemnon gained his own position even toward the poet himself. Such a creation is, like a child, the creature of its father: once in the world, it soon enters upon its own path through events. The father is unable to force it to be other than it is. Now I say that Homer, in the justice with which he treats the characters created by him but then unleashed to free struggle with fate, surpasses the other poets known to me.

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I do not place Homer here merely over against the poet of the Nibelungen, but modern narrators can be compared with him here. In all of them—a series of works is present to me as I say this—we see where acting societies are represented the same, I would say, universally human-literary method emerge. And indeed, it is to be observed in the first place how much those who form the center of the total development are technically treated differently than their surroundings. Always these main persons have something outline-less, general, wavering in comparison to the others, who, filled with character and individual peculiarities, step forward much more firmly and surely than they, and whose way of acting we almost know beforehand.

How is this difference explained? Since, on the contrary, the opposite would be to be expected.

One of the most successful, at once most national and international, most experienced authors is Dickens. I pick out one of his most transparently composed novels, *Little Dorrit*, one of his later works in which his way of working acts in a firmly pronounced manner. The main persons of the composition, the young girl and the young man by whom the interest is carried, are technically treated differently than the other persons. Emerging in partly very sharp silhouettes, these others have about them something tending toward caricature, while those two, equipped only with general qualities that turn the reader's sympathy ever more richly toward them, sometimes receive something almost blurred. Dickens wanted the almost exaggerated feeling of life-truth that the secondary figures of this novel breathe to benefit the two main persons, to whom a shimmer of reality is thereby lent—a mere appearance, which was only to be reached in this artificial way.

All those secondary persons serve the two main figures, who, of an entirely different nature than they, are filled with the dreamily indistinct wavering between willing and musting that is given by the poets as something indefinite and almost indefinable to all higher-standing natures.

Notice how Goethe observes the same procedure in *Wilhelm Meister* and in *Elective Affinities*. In both novels, the secondary characters possess something entirely well-defined in both mind and body—painted, as it were, with a Dutch brush—while Wilhelm and Mignon, Eduard and Ottilie, are covered as if by a delicate mist that lets outlines and colors blur, and through which feelings and thoughts shine. The same applies to Faust, Tasso, and Iphigenie. Their outward form merely trembles around them. They are not painted terracottas like the figures surrounding them, but twilight apparitions. We do not see; we only intuit. And so it is with Hamlet, Cordelia, Juliet, Macbeth, Don Carlos, Wallenstein: they waver before our eyes and seem to keep their final secret to themselves. This unfinished, doubtful quality of the protagonists always seems to keep open for the poet a final decision regarding the course of their fate. Thus, breaking away from the path they have taken, they might turn here or there, while those secondary characters are condemned to walk the road once taken to its end with a firm step. Without wishing to exhaust this theme here—so that I could actually break off—I will nevertheless cite a prosaic epos in which the contrast emerges with particular brilliance: Nievo's *Confessions of an Italian* (*Memorie di un ottuagenario*), one of the best novels of the 19th century. The main character, Pisana, moves in absolute lack of restraint. This figure—one could call her a Philine translated into the politically heroic—utterly lacks defining outlines, yet fills us with a penetrating feeling of her presence; because she is surrounded by a wealth of characteristically etched figures, she is enveloped in an outward appearance of existence that we nowhere find lacking. Considered by herself, however, she has something insubstantial about her.

This freedom of the true poet—to shape his main figures (without whom his poetry would become hollow) as simultaneously ideally blurred and realistically firm, thus embodying in them a mysterious contradiction, just as life itself presents us with overwhelming characters—always springs from the same source: that the poet does not depict in them characters more or less distant from himself, but shows in more general outlines his own existence that oppresses him. The social standing of the one to whom he

assigns this office of representing himself plays no role here. Gil Blas, a servant, represents the critique with which Le Sage views his own time, thereby lending the novel its efficacy. (Voltaire did not produce a single figure of this kind.) Don Quixote, though possessed by madness, is mentally superior to all the figures surrounding him, and his baroque, dreamily strange outward form recedes into the background next to this inner quality. Even to his Preciosa (the prototype of Mignon), Cervantes knew how to impart something of this essence, which neither Lope nor Calderon—who never give of themselves—were capable of imparting to their figures. Molière's *Misanthrope* possesses it to a high degree; none of the creations of Corneille and Racine possess it. Dante, on the other hand, in his own wavering figure, which he made the center of his poem, created a wonderful image of this embodied critique. For all sights present themselves to his critique; even the highest apparitions of Paradise are only there to find reflection and explanation in his spirit. Dante passes through the experiences to which Virgil leads him without other personal qualities than that of a highly sensitive receptivity. Virgil has his mission as Dante's guide. Dante himself only wants to experience and report. This is what Wilhelm Meister wants. This is what Werther wants. This is what Hamlet wants. They want to see, to feel, to fulfill their fate. (Therefore, in *Wilhelm Meister*, no conclusion is possible.) This is the secret of Achilles in Homer: Achilles wants nothing. He knows everything in advance. He passes through events. He has no conclusion in the *Iliad*.

That his downfall is imminent, we know. With Achilles, it is only a matter of the inner transformation. He wants to experience it because he must experience it. No rescue. It is the genius of the Greek people embodied in him. He expresses Homer's innermost sentiment.

Wherever Achilles appears, we feel he provides the impetus for the movement of thought in the others. Outwardly, however, he lacks characteristic markings. He is like a thunderstorm, like an overflowing torrent, like a cloudburst, like a falling rock. And the closer the poem nears its end, the more this elemental quality emerges. He has something boundless. Only because Homer surrounds him with a wealth of sharply

defined individualities—formed most artistically in various manners and always appearing in firm colors and outlines—does it become possible for the poet to surround the limitless in Achilles' nature, the wavering between the human and the divine, with credible apparent outlines. Either he does not name him and lets him stay in our memory only in the background, or he places him right before us, but then so powerfully that the others pale, yet Achilles always appears as one of them. The triumph of poetic skill.

And now we admire further in what variation Homer treats Achilles' surroundings. Dolon and Thersites occupy the lowest rank; they are at the same time the most visible figures. Step by step, he elevates the other figures until in Hector, Diomedes, and Patroclus they almost reach Achilles: but how much individually unique detail does he mix even into these to preclude any comparison with Achilles. Indeed, I believe that this endeavor to make Achilles the most sublime figure of the poetry contributed to the fact that the dealings of the gods had to take on such glaringly strange forms at times. Among the gods, none acts—humanly speaking—out of noble, pure thoughts. Homer's gods are like passionate children who take everything as a toy to caress and to destroy. Agamemnon, on the other hand, is a man. A man to whom the means of common human life are familiar and acceptable for carrying out his plans.

Thus, I return now to the consideration of Agamemnon and how Homer shaped him technically. While Achilles, in what he does and says, can only be understood from the widest ideal circumference of human soul-life, we perceive in Agamemnon the conglomerate of a wealth of individual real activities. Each event of his life separates itself from the other, yet always bears the color peculiar to Agamemnon. Hence the unity. Because Homer keeps him on the stage in an uninterrupted sequence of small actions, Agamemnon becomes entirely familiar to us, however little he is sympathetic to us. If we follow his character through the twenty-four books of the *Iliad*, a firm, dense web stands before our eyes. Everywhere the king appears, he acts from the same points of view. These scenes never repeat. They always intensify. His last appearance shows him as his first let him appear: ruthless, status-conscious, avaricious. It is as if the poet wanted to

say: fate is powerless against this man; he remains the same. How does the poet come to carry out a personality so distant from our hearts, indifferent in the nobler sense, in such specialized detail? Were there personal experiences of a special kind here? There will be no answers to such questions. I recall with what effort Goethe in *Wilhelm Meister* reworked the personalities of his daily Weimar surroundings into novel characters. We have many confidential passages about this in his letters; the actual procedure remains hidden from us nonetheless. And we never know whom he had in mind, however accurately we are informed about the Weimar circumstances.

In order to understand Agamemnon's way of acting in an individual case, it is always necessary to go back to what immediately preceded. Legally, Agamemnon is always in the right. The content of the *Iliad* is, once we look away from Achilles, like a complicated lawsuit in which the poet acts simultaneously as the prosecutor and as the confidential advocate of the participant. He knows the secrets of the whole society.

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At the end of the ninth book, Agamemnon had recognized himself—as far as his difference with Achilles is concerned—as ill-advised and in the wrong. Note how businesslike the approach was. To reconcile Achilles—or in modern terms: to win back the striking principal army commander to the service—the king naturally had to take the first steps. He consents to do so. But note his procedure. He is ready to do what can be demanded, but no more! How little he approached what the situation required with full devotion; instead, filled with an insurmountable pride, he overestimated the value of his voluntary self-abasement. He goes to work commercially. He had a high price offered to Achilles for the recovery of his cooperation against Ilion, but believes that with this he has now done the utmost. It could not have been about the mere return of Briseis (who was not led back immediately but only promised) or about high gifts (which were likewise not sent along immediately but only offered) for a long time now. Without Achilles, the Greek cause was lost: Agamemnon knew it quite well, but does not let it be noticed as if it had already come to that. Why had the king not gone to Achilles himself? Why was Briseis not given to the envoys

immediately? Nestor sensed that Odysseus and his companions would accomplish little; he ran after him and asked him to talk to Achilles quite insistently. Odysseus himself, however, was so much under the feeling of the futility of his message that he—who certainly knew how to speak—discharged his commission in Achilles' tent briefly and without special rhetoric despite Nestor's request. In Odysseus's bare manner of officially reporting the failed mission to Agamemnon lay his critique. He reported only what had been foreseeable. Diomedes' inspired speech to the princes, to whom Agamemnon no longer knew what to say, was after all only a magnificent masking of the helplessness that dominated everyone.

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One expected nothing more from Agamemnon. Yet things were always such that for the next day, the general fate depended on the bravery and initiative of the king, although he had already been publicly reproached for a lack of bravery. Diomedes' proposal to eat, drink, sleep, and fight the next day to the last drop of blood was nothing for which the acceptance required a special decision. For nothing else remained.

Thus begins the tenth book of the *Iliad*.

Everything sleeps in the camp. Only the king does not. Loneliness begins to speak to him. He tears at the hair of his head as if he wanted to offer it as a sacrifice to Zeus. Like pouring rain, thoughts rustle around him. He believes he hears the roar of battle. He turns his gaze to both sides: here the dark silence of the Greek camp, there the infinite watch-fires of the Trojans, and the noise that reaches him from there. A new thought comes to him: for what reasons has the enemy not returned to the city? Does Hector intend to move to the attack this very night? Agamemnon rises to seek out Nestor. It was also not impossible that the guards at the trench were sunk in sleep. They had to be checked.

The poet uses a special means to let the inner restlessness of the sleepless Agamemnon be noticed. The king has thrown a lion's skin over himself and seized the spear. Thus he intends to seek out Nestor. Yet he hesitates again: he first arms himself fully. He is in the process of putting on his armor when Menelaus approaches. He, too, had been unable to sleep.

Menelaus speaks first. Why is Agamemnon in arms? Does he not want to send someone out to scout the intentions of the enemy? It must be a bold man who would undertake that!

Advice was needed by both, Agamemnon replies. Zeus has turned away from the Greeks; Hector would not have performed such immense deeds without Zeus. More has been done by Hector than he (Agamemnon) has himself experienced anywhere, or than has even been attributed to a hero. And Hector is, after all, the son of neither a goddess nor a god.

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Notice these conclusions. The king is accustomed to always asking first about the rank and the protection of those who are involved in the events. To Homer's audience, this view was already as natural as it is to us or as it was to the Germans of Tacitus, who distinguish between birth and merit. Among the Olympians, too, considerations of this kind provide the decision. We shall see at the conclusion of the *Iliad*, when Hector's and Achilles' final battle is discussed beforehand in the council of state of the gods and the course is determined, how the fact that Achilles—as the more noble according to his descent—must not succumb tips the scales in his favor. Achilles was born of an immortal mother of the oldest divine nobility; Hector was only a king's son. It would have been easy for the gods to balance the mere difference in strength between the two heroes, but one must not be unfair in the council of the immortals toward Thetis as a high-born goddess. From this point of view, then, Agamemnon also judges things. He considers that the protection of Zeus, if it had really occurred, could increase Hector's strength immeasurably. Hector had performed deeds that innate bravery alone would not have permitted him; consequently, Agamemnon concludes, a change of opinion in favor of the Trojans has occurred on Olympus. As a powerful politician, he seeks the causes of the circumstances where, according to his experiences, they were always to be sought—and here, in fact, were. Instead of going back to personal merit, as the great mass does, he sees the causes of events in combinations, alone in intimate conversation with Menelaus.

The brothers think that the princes are to be summoned and the guards at the trench inspected. Menelaus takes it upon himself to bring Ajax and Idomeneus. Before he goes, he asks for a command as to whether he himself, after waking the two, is to return immediately to Agamemnon or proceed with the princes directly to the guards. [1] The latter is Agamemnon's will. We notice the official formality prevailing between the king and Menelaus.

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[1] Ajax's and Achilles' camp sites were the outermost of the army on two sides.

Agamemnon dismisses his younger brother, but not without impressing upon him some general rules of conduct. "When you wake the princes," he says, "address them by their full patronymic! Treat them with consideration! Do not speak down to them! Let us both do our part," he concludes, "in our common, great distress." With that, they part.

Agamemnon seeks out Nestor's tent and approaches his bed. The ancient hero half-rises on his elbow, supports his head, and asks:

> Who goes lonely here through the darkness
> At night around the ships, when the people sleep?
> Speak! Give account! What is it? And whom dost thou need?

And Agamemnon:

> Nestor, son of Neleus, glory of the Achaeans!
> Thou wilt surely know me? The son of Atreus,
> Whom the gods pursue as long as he lives,
> And upon whose eyes no sleep descends.
> Let us go down, whether the guards at the trench
> Have not fallen into slumber, weary from the fight,
> For the enemy is near, and the night could
> Still incite him to attack.

Nestor answers soothingly. He too proceeds from the assumption that Hector has done so much only under the special protection of Zeus; but he

believes in an expected reversal on Olympus. The gods, he thinks, would hardly fulfill for Hector all that he now hopes. On the contrary, things will go badly enough for him once Achilles' heart turns back to the Greeks. But he would now follow Agamemnon; the others must be awakened, whom he calls by name. It would also be good, he adds, if someone went to fetch Ajax and Idomeneus, whose ships are furthest away. Finally, he mentions Menelaus. "However dear and venerable he may be to me," Nestor says, "and however much he may take offense at what I say now: I must reproach him for sleeping and letting you toil alone. For things are in a bad way."

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A strange accusation. Yet stranger is what Agamemnon replies in excuse of his brother.

"On other occasions," says the king, "I have myself asked you to call Menelaus to account; but sometimes, when he holds back, it happens neither out of slowness nor out of indecision, but because he looks to me and expects from me the decisive word. This time he woke up earlier than I and came to me. I have sent him away to awaken those you name. We shall find him with them out at the guards."

"If things stand thus, no one will refuse to follow him." With these words, Nestor rises, and they go, first to wake Odysseus.

So Nestor criticizes the king's brother. He reproaches Menelaus for behavior that, as he says, has not caused offense for the first time here; and Agamemnon generally does not contradict, but excuses his brother for some special cases and particularly for today, whereupon Nestor declares himself satisfied.

What were those occasions on which Agamemnon himself had asked Nestor to call Menelaus to account? And how had the lukewarmness and reserve of Menelaus, which Nestor found blameworthy, manifested itself?

Either we are dealing here with incidents that the *Iliad* contained without them being included in our twenty-four books today, or the poet—as Shakespeare constantly does—points to things lying outside his poem which he merely wishes to mention suggestively. But even the admonition

with which Agamemnon had urged his brother to treat the princes politely sounded strange. How does Menelaus appear to us when we take together everything that had been reported of him up to that point?

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Recall that in the great quarrel scene of the first book, where Agamemnon and Achilles fall out before all the people, he neither acted nor was even named. In the second book, when Agamemnon summons the heroes: Nestor, Idomeneus, the two Ajaxes, Diomedes, and Odysseus, he does not invite Menelaus. Yet the latter appears anyway. “For,” says the poet, “he knew in his spirit with what hardship his brother had to struggle.” Does Homer mean by this that the brothers, under whose command the Greek army stood, understood each other to such a degree that there was no need for a special invitation for Menelaus? Or had Menelaus intentionally not been summoned and yet come? Why?—did he hold too high a position alongside Agamemnon to even be summoned by the commander-in-chief like the other princes? Homer must have known that he was stirring up such questions; but he does not answer them.

In the Catalogue of Ships that occupies the conclusion of the second book, Menelaus is again treated in a striking manner. The tableau of the Greek deployment given here corresponds in its sequence neither to the real power relations nor to the geographical location of the regions from which the princes came, nor finally to the actual order which their ships occupied within the deployment on the Trojan shore. By what principle is the catalogue given then? It becomes a little more understandable if we direct our eyes toward certain contrasts. Ajax the Telamonian, Diomedes, Agamemnon, and Menelaus form the center of the camp as an intended unity. But even as far as this center is concerned, Homer’s description of personnel is of unequal detail. Perhaps Ajax is dismissed here with only two verses because the poet wants to return to him later. With Diomedes, on the other hand, the names of his comrades who served under him are also mentioned; we learn those of the other princes elsewhere. Regarding Agamemnon, it is said that the most and best people follow him and that he is the bravest. On the other hand, it is neither mentioned nor otherwise marked here that he had undertaken the entire expedition and all the others

had pledged themselves to follow him in the army. That surely should have been the starting point. [1]

[1] If we assume that the catalogue was inserted later, it would certainly have been composed with pedantic uniformity and with consideration of all other information present in the poem.

Of Menelaus, who follows Agamemnon, we hear that he leads sixty ships which lay separately with their crew. “And he himself,” it says further, “went about among them, trusting in his (or in their) good will, and driving them to battle. For he yearned to avenge Helen’s abduction and her sighs.” What does the poet want to say with these details here? It was surely self-evident that Menelaus, who ruled his kingdom for himself, also had his own station with his ships? But why did their ships not lie next to each other? And if we see the brothers in our tenth book discussing their position toward the other princes, we recall again the separation of their camp sites. The two whose common interest inspired the campaign keep far apart with their ships and peoples. Homer certainly has something special in mind here.

The first direct judgment of Menelaus we receive is in the third book from the mouth of the Trojan elder Antenor, who, sitting upon the Scaean gate, describes Menelaus and Odysseus to his fellow citizens. He had hosted them himself when they appeared in Troy. Menelaus has broad shoulders. He spoke briefly, but with substance. He was the younger! Here Antenor could mean that Menelaus was the younger next to Odysseus, but his youth could also be highlighted by Antenor as a decisive factor in general. Homer seems to have had the latter in mind, for only from this assumption does the right light fall upon Agamemnon now in the tenth book.

Menelaus is not only the younger brother, but the young man for whom the elder must answer—the inexperienced one whom Nestor was well-permitted from time to time, with Agamemnon’s consent, to set straight.

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He is the youthful son-in-law of Zeus, all too proud of his power and Helena's descent, whom the older brother impresses upon that they both must remember how precarious their situation is. Menelaus is the rash prince who, however, when he reflects, well knows how to appreciate that Agamemnon is superior to him, and who holds back until the older brother has declared himself or commanded. When Menelaus speaks with Agamemnon, he addresses him with the most respectful, flattering word "*Atheie*," which younger brothers are accustomed to use toward older ones. Formality prevails between them. And this higher kind of dependence in which Menelaus felt himself toward Agamemnon was perhaps the reason why he had not encamped with his ships and crews near the king. He wanted to be less observed and corrected. And in the Greek camp, this relationship was well known. And Nestor had allowed himself to say a word about it from time to time, and Agamemnon had nothing against it. We sense in retrospect how the poet already keeps in mind in the initial books the circumstances that only find their sufficient explanation in the tenth. And all this Homer lets flow in incidentally, just as life itself often lets the traits from which we recognize a man's character become visible occasionally.

In the third book, we saw the preparations for the first battle. Menelaus and Paris stood opposite one another, and Menelaus's eagerness for battle was depicted in blooming colors just as vividly as the horror with which Paris recoils before him. We then hear of Helena's sudden longing for Menelaus; we see her standing on the wall, and the most prominent among the Greeks are named and described by her to old Priam. Agamemnon first, then Odysseus, Ajax, Idomeneus. But Priam asks neither after Diomedes nor after Menelaus. They are simply the younger ones, whose heroism will develop only later.

Menelaus's prayer before the duel with Hector implored from heaven only punishment for Paris's treachery.

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Let me punish him who did me evil first!

Let me slay him with these hands!
So that for all times men may shudder
To do evil to the guest-friend who receives them kindly!

The violated hospitality outrages him. He does not speak of Helena. The official view of Menelaus and his kin was that Helena felt unhappy in Troy and her sighs must be avenged. Menelaus remains in the foreground in the third book. We saw how Agamemnon, after the treacherous shot with which Pandarus wounds Menelaus, for the first time beside himself in a purely human sense. The conclusion of his speech: "then may the wide earth open up to him also," seems to break forth from the heart.

But Agamemnon simultaneously reveals to us other reasons that make the life of Menelaus dear to him. Not only does the thought of returning alone to the fatherland without him terrify him, but also that the entire expedition, as soon as Menelaus is no longer there, is a lost undertaking! Without booty, the Greeks must then go home again! Menelaus's life was precious! And how much the poet wanted this consideration to be seen as permeating the Greek army was shown in the fifth book, where Menelaus, healed from the arrow shot, faced Aeneas, who, as the son of Aphrodite, stood above all Trojans in rank and was considered the most powerful among them. When the young Antilochus, Nestor's son, sees Aeneas and Menelaus with raised spears, he steps full of concern as a second fighter next to Menelaus; and Aeneas, with the uninhibited tactical overview that Homeric heroes always show in such cases, recognizes the inequality of the match and withdraws.

The special care with which Agamemnon stays close to his brother in particular emerged at the beginning of the seventh book, where Menelaus prepares for a duel against Hector, who challenges all Greek princes. Agamemnon will not tolerate this and determines his brother must step back. The sudden change in Menelaus, who obeys immediately, has something as strange here as the exuberant enthusiasm with which he previously, in his voluntary offer to save the honor of the Greek army by fighting Hector, accused the other princes—who had stood there in silent hesitation—of cowardice.

As Thersites had done, he had scolded them: they were not Achaean men, but Achaean women. And then it was enough that Agamemnon took him by the hand and made clear in two words with what strength Hector was superior to him. The further course of things is even more surprising. Agamemnon calls on his brother to desist from the fight altogether. He should settle down to rest with his people; another would surely fight with Hector. And in this too, Menelaus is of his opinion, and the servants take the armor from his shoulders. Not until the next day of battle do we see him fighting at Agamemnon's side again. But only his name is mentioned; Homer assigns him no special encounter with Trojan heroes. He disappears until the beginning of our tenth book, where he now seeks out Agamemnon in the night and Nestor speaks of him reprovingly.

Homer could not have made it clearer how Menelaus related to the other princes and they to him. He was yielding. He stood next to his brother without being subordinate to him. All the more decisive was Agamemnon's moral preponderance. [1]

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[1] We know of no ancient type of Menelaus. That such a one existed follows from a passage in Philostratus where the friendly, the kind (τὸ ἥμερον) is named as Menelaus's characteristic. On Etruscan mirrors, he appears beardless next to the bearded Agamemnon; he is also placed in parallel with the likewise beardless Paris. I owe these (and other, here omitted) notes to Brunn. My intention is not to go into these things. I mention them only to emphasize the specifically youthful character of Menelaus, which must be stressed for his appearance. The famous colossal group called Menelaus and Patroclus must be identified differently. Even in Cornelius's depictions of the battles before Troy, the false conception has passed over, while Cornelius again, in the wedding of Peleus and Thetis, represents Peleus as a youth. No pictorial illustration of Homer, whether ancient or modern, is known to me that would correspond to the content of the Iliad and Odyssey as the unbiased reading of the poems shows their figures to us. Collections of ancient artworks, the sight of which is supposed to let our learning youth penetrate deeper into Homer, are only suited to confuse and to place false views into the imagination.

His high rank and his younger years placed Menelaus, as it were, beyond criticism. Therefore, Agamemnon's admonition to be polite with the princes is doubly appropriate, Nestor's reproach understandable, and again Agamemnon's defense very skillful, excusing Menelaus's inconsistent behavior by the consideration he has for him, the older brother.

Homer has represented in Paris alongside Hector and in Menelaus alongside Agamemnon two archetypes of fraternal relationships that human life offers. In Hector, the poet lets the calm elder appear, carrying the welfare and honor of the family purely in his heart, joined by the frivolous younger Paris, who constantly creates new embarrassments but is amiable and ashamed of his faults. Again and again Hector hopes, with the growing seriousness of the circumstances, for the moment of a thorough change in Paris's whole nature. Alternating between kindness and severity, he holds lovingly and unswervingly to his brother. Standing within the critically minded citizenry, on whose judgment women also have influence, both feel how much they depend on one another. The genuine sons of Priam had a circle of illegitimate ones around them, from whom they stand out. As in Florence from Dante's time to that of Michelangelo, the old citizens sat in the public squares and judged what happened in the city. Hector and Paris knew their position well, and the levity of the younger was as much a reproach for himself as a public calamity. The two sons of Atreus, on the other hand, represent in the Greek camp the union of two powerful princes who answer for each other. They too know the importance of public opinion within the army, but look down upon the allied Greeks with indifference.

They are polite out of calculation. Cold greed fills them. They show the security of two men who exactly measure what each of them would be without the other, and who are conscious that their success rests upon their unity. Homer wants to distinguish Menelaus, but uses for this purpose only outward signs of respect, surrounding him with them and never forgetting the innate second role of the younger next to the older brother. He lets neither the one nor the other ever appear surrounded by purely heroic, full

glory; there is always a “but.” Menelaus as a fighter stands far behind Agamemnon. Homer emphasizes the inferiority of Menelaus, one might almost say, as something self-evident. This treatment of Menelaus emerges not only in the passages taken from the Iliad so far, but on all subsequent occasions where Homer lets him intervene in the action, he shows the same disposition of character: the unproductive, the yielding, the polite. I shall later draw the total result once more from the full.

Let us not forget now, however, that Paris, Hector, and Helena, and Menelaus and Agamemnon are not main characters of special poems, but only figures who, as soon as we name Achilles, lose in light and weight, even if they stand there in far more visible outlines than Achilles. Precisely for this reason the poet characterizes them so firmly and thoroughly, because they are only there to serve as a background and setting for Achilles in his brilliant indeterminacy.

Agamemnon then went with Nestor to the campsite of Odysseus. They do not enter his tent, but Nestor calls out from outside, and Odysseus comes forth. Again the same question: why they wander lonely through the ships at night, when other mortals sleep. Note also that only Nestor calls to Odysseus and negotiates with him: here we feel rightly how Homer lets Agamemnon be present, veiled by the darkness, but not clearly visible, for Odysseus well sees that two of them came to him, since he addresses them as “you” (plural).

Odysseus throws his shield over himself and follows. All three reach the place where Diomedes rests. Surrounded by his companions, he lies outside the tent. Nestor nudges Diomedes’ foot with his foot and asks scoldingly how one can sleep while the Trojans stand just before the Greek camp. Diomedes springs up. His first sensation is that it is not fitting for him, the younger, to be awakened by elders, and he begins with reproaches that Nestor came himself instead of sending out younger men. “Well,” the latter answers, “so you go now to fetch the others.” Again it corresponds to the prevailing darkness that Diomedes only negotiates with Nestor, whom he recognized by his voice, and leaves the king and Odysseus out of account;

yet it does not seem poetically true that the lion's skin he throws over himself is provided with an adjective indicating its color. The poetry suddenly changes its character here. For the words that are further exchanged here between Diomedes and Nestor satisfy me just as little. Not inappropriate, but hollow, they perhaps point to another genuine, shorter conversation that we no longer possess. It is highly striking how, without transition, the princes of the Achaeans are suddenly together at the trench, with the guards of the camp. They find these sitting there in arms, always turning their gaze toward the plain, whether anything is to be noticed of the approaching enemy. Nestor speaks the word to encourage them to further careful watch. And then, crossing the trench, the princes step out into the open, where the corpses of those whom Hector had struck down the day before still lie. Sitting here to hold council, they decide to scout out the Trojans. All this in short, bare words, as if it were the extract of a lost, broader description.

Diomedes undertakes the mission, but is not to go alone and shall himself choose as a companion the one he deems suitable. Immediately Agamemnon strives to prevent the choice from falling perhaps on Menelaus. But he must not speak it openly.

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> Choose for yourself whom you want to accompany you,
> But the one who appears most capable to you,
> And not who comes first in birth or power!
> And so he spoke because concern filled him,
> That Diomedes' choice might hit Menelaus.

Homer this time does not content himself with letting us merely guess Agamemnon's thoughts, but explains the deeper meaning of the king's speech himself. How considerately he lets him choose his words—he who, warned by Nestor's critique of his brother, no longer dared to keep Menelaus away from danger by direct intervention. Note at the same time, however, how Agamemnon, in order to indicate that he means Menelaus, designates him as indeed standing before all others in birth and power, but abandons his capability.

Only now, where Diomedes sets out with Odysseus, whom he had chosen, begins the adventure that has given the tenth book the special name *Doloneia*. The narrative of the setting out of the two heroes into the Trojan camp is a wonderful piece of poetic work. We have seen how Homer—like the other poets following him through the millennia—loves to describe the silent, dark night. If we wanted to bring together all the verses that have been addressed to the night by great poets, it would seem as if all poetry had sprung from the feeling of the infinite mystery into which the night repeatedly pulls us. As long as the world stands, its depth, its silence, its loneliness repeats itself. Again and again, its veils make the visible invisible. Again and again, the twilight preceding and following it fills us with expectation. What would we be if it never darkened? The night is the friend of the creative genius. As Diomedes and Odysseus now stride along in the last third of the night, for the first two thirds were consumed, one believes one can hear their steps echoing. Then they perceive the flight of a heron, which Pallas Athena sent as a favorable omen. They do not see the bird in the darkness, but by the flapping of its wings they recognize it. Each of them speaks a prayer to the goddess.

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The scene changes. Homer transports us into the Trojan camp.

Hector, too, finds no rest. He has assembled the most prominent and offers a prize to the one who would scout the position of the Greeks. Now we get to know Dolon. Homer has a peculiar way of characterizing people by their position within the family. What other poet would have hit upon describing the foolish self-confidence of a person by the following traits:— Dolon's father is a people's herald, thus an official of significance. Dolon is wealthy. Dolon is "of ill shape," as Voss translates, but a "swift runner." Dolon is the only son alongside five sisters! The monstrous impertinence with which this fellow makes the request to Hector that he wants to spy on the Greeks if Achilles' chariot and his horses are promised to him, shows what education this only son of the rich Eumedes had received in the circle of his five sisters. Homer reminds one here of Molière, just as in Thersites he has something of Shakespeare.

In Hector, we perceive the progress of growing infatuation. Hector overestimates himself. In outward things, this first comes to light. A trait that Achilles lacks completely. Hector is the parvenu; Achilles knows that primordial divine blood flows in his veins. According to Hector's thoughts, the Greeks are already in the process of departing for home, and his concern is only to surprise them in time. He disposes of the Greek booty with certainty. He already sees everything as his property. He has promised Dolon with a scepter raised to heaven that no other Trojan shall ever drive Achilles' team but he, and Dolon has set out. He wraps himself in a wolfskin, puts on an otter-cap, seizes the spear, and hurries toward the Greek camp. Odysseus first hears his approaching steps. With Diomedes, he hides aside from the path, and they let him pass by in order to drive him all the more surely toward the Greek camp during the pursuit.

Dolon's behavior after they have cornered him corresponds to what we already know of him. As a "swift runner," he first sought his salvation in flight.

Then Diomedes' spear flies close over his shoulder, thrown intentionally so that he would remain uninjured. And now the extreme of contemptibility: how Dolon begs for himself weeping, how Diomedes comforts him, how he then betrays what they wish to know, and in his stupidity even the price for which he undertook the journey. Thersites, despite the beating he received, carries a heroic shimmer compared to Dolon. Thersites is impudent, Dolon miserable. Smiling, Odysseus remarks that to drive the team of the son of Peleus is indeed not every mortal's business. And now further confessions and as a conclusion the base and successful attempt to direct Diomedes and Odysseus away from the Trojans toward Rhesus, the newly arrived leader of Thracian auxiliary peoples. He describes Rhesus's white horses, the golden armor of his people, and the chariot plated with noble metals. One feels how the booty-hungry Diomedes listens intently when Rhesus's white horses are named. Had Dolon not committed the folly of speaking of Achilles' team, we might still have hope for his life, for Achilles often let his prisoners be ransomed instead of killing them, as would have been his right. But Dolon is too contemptible a customer, and his career find

immediate conclusion. Diomedes strikes off his head with one blow while he kneels before them hoping for mercy, and the two now set out for the campsite of the Thracians.

What takes place here, the murder of sleeping men, has something terrible. We recall the scenes in Paris in the nights of the Commune rule, when the heroic priests were killed. Such acts of pitiless theft of life were in the realm of the self-evident for the heroes of Homer. Nevertheless, the mute, nightly executioner's work that the two perform on Rhesus and his companions lying in deep sleep around him is cruel beyond the human. Sleep has something holy. It lets the strongest man become like a child. One would protect one's enemy if someone touched him in sleep. We feel immediately that Diomedes and Odysseus are doing something that has a consequence in a higher sense.

Note that these Thracians have only just arrived, and that no Greek blood clings to the hands of any of them. Note also how the two murder only because they want to lead away the horses. To be sure, it may be taken into account that Hector's foolish promise to Dolon, which the latter did not conceal in his mortal fear, had to provoke Diomedes and Odysseus to the utmost. It is also to be considered that Pallas Athena is always protectively present and the gruesome slaughter happens under her eyes. However that may be, Homer too condemns the deed. He expresses it immediately in his way. Odysseus, after he has untied the horses and led them away, through the still-twitching Thracians whom he grabbed by the feet and pulled aside so that the animals would not become restless when crossing the corpses, gives a whistle to remind Diomedes that it was time to go. "But he remains standing hesitantly, considering how he might now accomplish the most dog-like thing." He wants to kill more of them, or carry out from the circle of the dead the king's chariot together with the armor, holding them high in the air. Then Athena warns him. Diomedes recognizes the goddess and makes off. On Rhesus's white horses they gallop away, which Odysseus—who had forgotten the prince's golden scourge—beats with his bow. Only once do they stop to pick up Dolon's bloody armor, and they reach the

Greek princes where they had left them. Nestor is the first who hears them coming and who admires the horses.

Note the expression, the “most dog-like” (*das Hündischste*). Were we to stand in relation to Homer as we do today toward Goethe, it could be determined whether Homer had not first introduced into the literature of his day the expression that corresponds to our “common” or “base.” Zeus threw the word “dog-like” at Hera (in the eighth book) to tell her that he considered her a beast. But the most significant use is found in the seventh book of the *Odyssey*. Odysseus excuses before Alcinous his request for food and drink. “So weak are we mortals,” he says, that even in the most sublime moods of the soul the base needs of the stomach assert themselves.

In Homer, “dog-like” denotes the disregard for ideal impulses; in his sense, it was hardly possible to brand Diomedes’ actions more sharply than by this word, which the poet puts into Diomedes’ own mouth. In doing so, he allows, perhaps not unintentionally, an ambiguity to flow in. According to his diction, “the most dog-like” in our passage can refer only to what the Thracians had to suffer, but it can also refer to the disposition from which it was accomplished. To be sure, it was with the consent of Athena; but she and Hera shrink from nothing in the *Iliad*, and Hera herself, as we just saw, was scolded as “dog-like” by Zeus. How the Greek princes judge the deed, we do not learn. Not even that they ask about what happened. The wonderful Thracian horses occupy their thoughts entirely. They are the only subject of conversation.

A few more verses, and the book concludes.

It seems almost impossible that Homer should have let it break off thus. Who, to be sure, would undertake to restore the genuine conclusion? The adventures of this night cannot have ended in this way. I miss the report of the two scouts to Agamemnon. Furthermore, the decision regarding the distribution of the booty, which the king himself might have claimed for himself in the first instance—perhaps did claim? Odysseus had led the horses away: why were they allotted to Diomedes alone, while Odysseus contents himself with Dolon’s armor? Why is it the trampling of the horses

by which the Greek princes first recognize the return of the scouts, and why are the horses, which are admired, the first subject of conversation here in such a striking manner? This is the way Homer shapes introductions when he prepares main scenes. Why does Diomedes not lead the team to his campsite himself at the end, but "all the Achaeans" do it? Had Diomedes perhaps impetuously demanded the horses for himself, and Odysseus had nobly, or to avoid strife, given in? Did Diomedes perhaps act brutally in his way, so that there lay in this too something that led one to expect later retribution or that already signified the beginning of this retribution?

For let us note well: Diomedes was greedy and his mind was particularly set on horses; and the relationship—that he himself killed Rhesus, but Odysseus untied the horses—is an unclear one that could give occasion for different interpretations. Facts are weighed very finely in Homer, and the end of the *Doloneia,* [Book 10 of the *Iliad,*] is too full of unresolved suggestions for us to be satisfied with its current form. Let us compare how Homer prepares the arrow-shot that Diomedes receives from Paris in the following eleventh book. He motivates this wounding so carefully because it is of great importance for the structure of the *Iliad*. We see how high a position the poet assigns to Diomedes, who, as long as Achilles remains away, represents, as it were, in his place the element of Greek invincibility. Diomedes, as was explained earlier, is not Achilles' rival, but fills his place. Diomedes must therefore not be overcome by a stronger man in the eleventh book, but only treachery may harm him. Homer let Diomedes suddenly arise when Achilles disappeared, and lets him suddenly disappear when Achilles re-enters, so that a comparison of Diomedes' achievements with those of Achilles and Patroclus is not possible. As soon as the return of these two to the battle is to be expected, there is no longer any use in the poem for Diomedes worthy of his strength. Only in the twenty-third book, at the funeral games in honor of Patroclus, does Diomedes rise again and give the final proof of his immense strength by fighting for the prize with the Telamonian Ajax, who stood there as equally invincible among the Greeks. And now we notice Homer's subtlety: their contest remains undecided! The task of both had been to attack each other in full armor, and

the victor should be the one who first wounded the other to the point of drawing blood. What Diomedes does here justifies our feeling that the murder of Rhesus aroused in us: carried away by the desire to win the victory prize by all means, he exceeds the limit of what is permitted.

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What he does here, too, is "dog-like." Ajax had thrust through the shield as far as the breastplate, which withstood the spearhead; but Diomedes aims with the point of his glittering spear over the edge of the shield, always toward Ajax's neck; and the Greeks, concerned for Ajax, raise an objection. They are to fight no further but share the prize. In the word "always" lies the reproach. The chosen verb here also has something striking about it, for it could be understood as if Homer had wanted to say: it was strange that Diomedes, as if by chance, always aimed over the edge of the shield at the neck of Ajax. The secondary sense of the accidental sticking in *αἰὲν ἐπ' αὐχένι κῦρε* (always aimed at the neck), I repeat, reinforces the reproach. We see how exactly Homer weighs everything concerning Diomedes.

That the tenth book had already suffered deprivations at the beginning was suggested, as we saw, by the bare passage where Diomedes' awakening is told, as well as the beginning of the council of princes outside the trench.

To speak of additions and omissions in general is permitted in those passages of the *Iliad* where the narrative falls into incoherence or into what is obviously abbreviated. Also, where empty schematic passages occur instead of individual treatment, we are right to suspect gaps that fell prey to workmanlike supplementation. On the whole, such cases occur rarely enough, and more frequently in the *Iliad* than in the *Odyssey*, whose harmonious pace has preserved its smoothness and purity almost everywhere; while in the *Iliad*, to be sure, the power struggling for form often leaps from one depiction to another, so that it gains the false appearance of being merely fragments joined together.

It is quite generally believed that the tenth book was only interpolated into the *Iliad*. I consider it indispensable. It contains things that the poem must not lack. In seeking to show this, I did indeed become unfaithful to my intention of leaving unconsidered what others say. However, it would then

have been unavoidable to assume the appearance as if I knew nothing of the condemnation of this book to the rank of a subsequent interpolation.

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It has also been asserted that the *Doloneia* reminds one more of the poetic style of the *Odyssey*.

Homer is said to have composed the *Iliad* in his youth, the *Odyssey* in his old age. Youth and age are accustomed to express themselves differently. Certainly, an element of comfortable narrative, foreign to the *Iliad*, prevails in the *Odyssey*. A longing for rest. The *Iliad* is filled with inserted images of the agitated sea: without a whipping wind, the sea seems unthinkable to the youthful Homer; the *Odyssey* is not lacking in storms either, but it requires prior force to evoke them. The natural sight for the poet of the voyages of Odysseus is the still, calm tide, which might make the homecoming easy for the one tarrying in the distance. And he is drawn back to his home not so that he might then set out again for new battles, but he treads the long-deprived soil of his island and wins back his house in order to extend the present in common persistence with his kin and to remember the past. In old age, man becomes a part of the clod on which he is at home. He becomes similar to the fruit-laden trees that do not move even in the wind. The landscape background, which is drawn with a much stronger hand by Homer in the *Iliad*, nevertheless pushes itself more densely into the foreground in the *Odyssey*. The adventure—because adventures are always pleasing and attractive—takes on a broader course in the *Odyssey* more for its own sake. In both poems, too, the personalities develop differently and their participation in events is of a different nature. In the *Iliad* we ask: How does the hero overcome fate? In the *Odyssey*: How does he most safely evade or outwit it? In the *Iliad*, the tensed powers of the soul and the body unfold as the deciding factor; in the *Odyssey*, even in heroic actions, chance and skill appear as the co-deciding, perhaps more important factors.

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Always new difficulties compel the participants in the *Odyssey* to extreme efforts: but the way in which the battles against gods, men, and elements are fought through results in no inner growth of the one who endures them. From the dangers of the *Iliad*, the hero emerges stronger; the perils of the *Odyssey* are like mere attacks of illness from which one seeks to save the former stock of strength. From the behavior of the individual within the hardships surrounding him, we draw no conclusions in the *Odyssey* for judging the entire nature of Odysseus. He behaves toward the Cyclops with almost childish exuberance; but we let that be, for the sailor's tale that Homer has woven into his poem here demands this appearance, and Odysseus must take on the role that the legend assigns to him. These fairy-tale follies cast no shadow on him, and it delights us to hear how this time he gets away with more luck than cunning. Such episodes are necessary to confirm the cheerful, comfortable tone of the *Odyssey*. Odysseus's general signature in it remains that of the sufferer in dangers. Not of the hero who wrestles with the gods. The surprising nature of the situations and the unexpected outcome that shows itself is the main thing. No particularly organized human nature is meant to appear in Odysseus. Nothing characteristic is meant to stick to him. No outbreak of inner peculiarity is meant to emerge. How very differently we find him characterized in the *Iliad*. What fine traits of his nature surprise us there. He is shrewd and deliberate here too, but not in such an ideal, childish way as the *Odyssey* represents him. As with the other fellow fighters before Ilion, the determining factor for the course of the entire action lies in what the moment elicits in active expressions of his powerful nature. If we put together the scenes of the *Iliad* in which Odysseus has influence on the course of things, the result is the firmly drawn picture of a man of sharp character: the *Odyssey*, by contrast, lets him appear almost without outlines. The melancholy pull toward home, which guides his fates here, is missing in him in the *Iliad*.

He does not belong in the Greek camp to the party of those who want to go home. He mentions Telemachus in an addition that indicates no longing

for his son. He wants to stay until Ilion is destroyed and gain booty. The suffering mildness of the *Odyssey* is foreign to Odysseus in the *Iliad*.

The character drawing of the poet of the *Iliad* shows itself consistently in the *Doloneia* as well. We have already recognized Homer's endeavor to lend fresh charm to the individual parts of the *Iliad* through special structure. In each of the successive books, he seems to begin as if anew. Of modern narrators, Dickens understands this best. Many of his novel chapters bear the appearance of fragmentary pieces that have been brought into the sequence of the others subsequently. The tenth book of the *Iliad* is the oldest example of the Dickensian treatment of the material. Dickens mostly composes as if great masses of witness statements and memories of stories circulating in the public had been preserved about a lawsuit that claimed the interest of the entire English society, from which he had connected a selection of the most interesting in such a way that the reader, led forward step by step, at the end of the novel considers himself to be in possession of the most worth knowing. All this fragmentary quality, however, was artificially placed into things. That "remainder," which one might think Dickens had omitted as too well-known, does not exist at all. The poet's intention is to group a number of characters around a great interest in such a way that they develop before our eyes and thereby bring about the conclusion of events. Let us also recall what Herder wrote to Gerstenberg about Shakespeare in 1771: "As the scenes of nature alternate and act into one another, however distant and dissimilar they seem, so in Shakespeare place and time and scene and content alternate, nothing but individual fragments; torn-out individual blowing leaves from the great book of Providence.

Thrown there in the storm of times and events, they blow along and hover before the eye: nothing but apparent disorder and fragmentation and a plan of drunkenness—but in the intention of the poet, in the head of the poet: there place and time and disparate content disappear. A whole! A great living illusion." The same applies to *Faust* and *Wilhelm Meister*. And the same for Homer's two poems, to which he has given the appearance as if they were composed of nothing but fragments.

The Odysseus of the *Iliad* is laid out differently by the poet than the one of the *Odyssey*. In the *Iliad*, he belongs to the persons whose general fate is indifferent to us alongside that of Achilles. The Odysseus of the *Iliad* is further from our hearty participation than Ajax or Diomedes, while the one of the *Odyssey* is akin to our heart. We suffer with him.

If Homer wanted to achieve this—if Odysseus was to become the main character of a poem—then Homer had to sacrifice something of the sharply minted characterization that he lends Odysseus in the *Iliad*. We step back to observe the Odysseus of the *Iliad* better; by contrast, we step close to him in the *Odyssey*. Telemachus and Penelope also stand under this law. Nausicaa is a vanishing, charming image; Penelope, on the other hand, the second main person, is, in "only gently suggested forms," the woman herself. She and her son must lose in visibility in a certain sense in order to gain in human emotional proximity. Telemachus is a young person who bitterly lacks the support that his father would have granted him, whom his civil position compels to seek him out. He tells himself that things cannot go on this way. He had proposed to his mother that she should remarry so that he would not face all the suitors who were consuming his property, but a single one with whom an agreement might perhaps be made. She does not agree to this. Neither for Penelope's sake alone, whose futile hoping oppressed his heart, nor out of mere childish longing, but mostly he sets out because his father's return is economically quite necessary. Telemachus is a brave youth, but above all a sensible manager of the family estate. Were we to think of him transported into the *Iliad*, no suitable place would be found there for his limited, peaceful manner.

The last and most significant difference in the poetic treatment of the figures in both poems, however, is that in the *Iliad* an unstoppable growth of the characters takes place, whereas in the *Odyssey* they remain within the form once granted to them. In the *Odyssey*, Odysseus concludes as he began. Telemachus does not appear differently at the end of events than before, but only demonstrates the more masculine maturity occurring in him, in which the first book already showed him. A certain weighing manner is peculiar to him. He obeys the advice of the elders without further

ado. He is never passionately moved, but calm and sensible. A little like Menelaus in the *Iliad*, only without his individual qualities. Penelope, too, does not reveal herself at the end of the poem as intervening in the action through her character. Cautious and reserved, she persists until the very end. Not the voice of the heart, but the convincing stories of Odysseus provide her with the final proof that it is really he whom she has been expecting. The dog that recognizes the old master again appears almost as the only carrier of spontaneous feeling. In the *Iliad*, by contrast, ever new sides of the individuality of Odysseus emerge, and only at the end of the poem does Homer lend him, like the others, the final stamping accent. To let Odysseus appear as a historical figure, nothing more would have been required than what the *Iliad* contains. The *Odyssey* brings hardly a single realistic trait that would represent him as endowed with new qualities. For his joy in his son, his revenge on the suitors, and his regained happiness in Penelope's arms are general human feelings and deeds which, to emerge, required no special natural disposition but only the mental health that should be characteristic of everyone. The way in which, having arrived home again, he defeats the suitors, the shrewdness with which he prepares the reversal of things, the heroic courage with which he carries it out, do indeed let him appear in an illumination such as never surrounds him in the *Iliad*; but we trust him from the beginning with the ability to make himself master again.

The *Iliad* and *Odyssey* show different methods of artistic treatment, then. Similar differences in the appearance of characters can be demonstrated in Goethe's works of youth and age. *Faust* in his old age, which Goethe himself composed in his own, takes on more and more general human nature without thereby stepping further from us. On the contrary, Faust's death moves us humanly the most. *Werther* forms the beginning, *Wilhelm Meister* the conclusion of Goethe's youthful poetry; *Hermann and Dorothea* opens the works of the mature years. Well then: in *Wilhelm Meister* and *Werther*, the leading personalities experience from chapter to chapter a more freely and broadly developing spiritual growth. Events depend on this. In *Werther*, in Lotte, in Mignon, there are always further developments opening up new prospects. In *Hermann and Dorothea*, on the

other hand, the figures are firmly shaped from the start: each has behind him the experiences that made him what we get to know him as in the poem. These are only reported subsequently. This work of Goethe's is a monument of creative artistic understanding, a work of such subtlety of feeling and technique that nothing seems to lie between it and the *Odyssey*. The *Iliad*, by contrast, is, like *Werther* and *Wilhelm Meister*, the oldest monument of the wrestling longing of a poet to give the unutterable. Therefore in these two works of Goethe's there is also not the gentle fading away as in *Hermann and Dorothea*, this poem which in its conclusion can be compared to Beethoven's symphonies; in *Werther* and *Wilhelm Meister*, finally, a seeming breaking off: both novels have their end as soon as the figures who have entered to participate in the action have made known the innermost of their nature. The poet no longer cares about the continuation of events. In the *Iliad* and *Wilhelm Meister*, Homer and Goethe depict personalities whom Goethe calls problematic: complicated characters, in whose consequential meeting a slight more or less is of importance for the course of events. In the *Odyssey* and *Hermann and Dorothea*, the characters are firm and transparent from the beginning. They have not grown with the poet; they have only been shaped.

If we consider the *Doloneia* from this side, it appears composed in the spirit of the *Iliad*. We do not expect what happens, but how the participants will behave. For the developing character development of Agamemnon, Menelaus, and Diomedes, the *Doloneia* is of decisive value. These three characters hold significant roles within the spiritual action of the *Iliad*; they continue to develop steadily, and a gap in progress would be felt if the *Doloneia* were pulled out of the sphere of the *Iliad*. It is not an independently existing, available novella-like adventure that can be added or omitted again, but belongs in the growth of the *Iliad*, between its ninth and eleventh books. To be sure, it provides the purest piece of mere "report" that the *Iliad* offers, if we except the twenty-third book. How thoroughly differently, however, does the poet behave here than in the *Odyssey*. His way of moderating the violent progress of the narrative through interspersed, acting comparisons corresponds entirely to the poetry of the

Iliad. Compare the way of narrating which Goethe maintains in *Werther* with that in *Hermann and Dorothea*. In *Werther* always the pressing for a surprising effect, the withheld haste; in *Hermann and Dorothea* the leisurely stepping forward, never over-hasty, toward something expected. This epic calm with the prospect of the certain is what is peculiar to the poetry of Daudet, Nievo, and Salvatore Farina today, while the one whom these three authors imitate—Dickens—presses forward with dramatic force toward something uncertain. In the few narrative pieces of Schiller, we perceive the same trait. This quality also lends Schiller's historical works their lasting effect. It also dwells in Treitschke's historiography, but not in Ranke's. It is here more about the nature of the authors than about their art. Thus, various considerations lead to viewing the *Iliad* as the work of the youthful Homer, and the *Odyssey* as that of his old age.

Eleventh Book

The narrating poet keeps the attention of his listeners awake. He allows it to be sensed that the unexpected is being prepared, and points toward it, even predicts it; only not in such a way that it would lose the power to nonetheless act with surprise. At the same time, we must never lose the memory of that which forms the actual interest of the tales. All events are present to him, those already reported as well as those still outstanding: to each, in its place, the appropriate accent is allotted. Much depends upon this accent. There are differences of liveliness with which that which is happening is presented. Differences also of the perspective from which one allows it to appear, and of the coloring. Differences of visibility in general. The poet sets us at times in the midst of the events or merely patches them in as secondary matters, which he seemingly only catches up on, here and there, whereby a more or less subdued light is bestowed upon them. All this has already been pointed out by me. Especially how Homer does not give the life-events of his heroes in a row, or builds them up in ordered masses, but rather brings precisely these communications to utterance only

occasionally. We take them into ourselves without being rightly conscious of whence the knowledge came to us. Most visibly does Homer treat Achilles in this manner: he allows the events of his life to flare up here and there, scattered in sparks. We receive always only details, as if they stood only by chance in their place, and yet remember them as a whole. In this way, indeed, life lets us get to know the men with whom we associate as living beings and by whom the fate of the present is prepared.

Of value to us in our judgment of them is mostly only that which they do and say on the last day, and only seldom is one accustomed to compare these always newest utterances with details by which earlier positions were characterized. Only in the large do we estimate the course they hold, and know little of the articulated totality of their deeds, which then after their death, being summarized, provide their historical image. Only when we, at great sections of their efficacy, once allow memory to rule, do we think through who the man was and what he has achieved.

We divine what will come in the eleventh canto. The disaster decreed over the Greeks occurs. The general final battle, which only finds an end with Hector’s death, begins with this, that those heroes upon whose vanguard bravery the cause of the Greeks is placed, leave the field one after another, incapable of battle by Zeus’s will: Agamemnon, Diomedes, Odysseus. At the close of the eleventh canto only Ajax still offers resistance, he too with the utmost exertion of strength. The eleventh canto contains nothing decisive, but it holds out the prospect of new, more pressing misfortune.

Homer’s intention is clear: Achilles can only then re-enter with full effect if he fights alone. The others must make room for him, so that he alone draws the gazes upon himself. Yet that lies still in the future. For the time being, we have the feeling that the events, which until then were wavering back and forth, get into flux and drive more sharply toward their goal.

Zeus employs a new means to accelerate this streaming: he forbids the gods to mingle in the throng of the combatants. Wrathful sit the heaven-

dwellers in their Olympian castles and look on idly as that gradually occurs which happens according to the will of the supreme god. Only to some of the members of the Olympian family, sticking half-way in allegory, who have not yet quite managed their own individuality, but rather surrounding Zeus as will-less elements, are like adjutants the immediate bearers of his commands, is it permitted to mingle into the throng of men. And so, in the first verses of the eleventh canto, which form its overture, the goddess "of murder" or "of discord," the "heavily-burdened" Eris, is sent down.

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And the red of day began to shine,
And Zeus sent Eris to the ships
With the sign of murder-lust in her fists.
And in the midst of the camp, where Odysseus'
Tents stood, while toward the left and right
Ajax here and Achilles there the outermost
Point held, because they were the strongest,
Down onto Odysseus' ship the goddess leaped,
Stood and bellowed Up! and the terrible voice
Let strength flow into the veins of the Greeks,
Forward into the infinite battle,
And the fight seemed to each the sweetest now,
Sweeter than to travel back to the homeland.

How beautifully the last two verses close these introductory bars. Always we see working in the soul of the Greeks the longing for the homeland. It is the gauge for the other feelings. The Odyssey is the natural consequence of the Iliad, as the lament is that of the distress of the Nibelungen. We see how Zeus, through Eris, smothers everything human in the Greeks in order to drive them into the fight. I have the feeling as if, in the original recitation of the Iliad, the musical element intervened to a high degree: at the beginning of this canto, it must have been especially effective.

Also in this, that Homer again lets Agamemnon arm himself before our eyes, a hint could be perceived that something violent is imminent, to which

the calm of putting on the individual pieces forms the preparatory contrast. None of the other Greek army-leaders is named this time: all, with their people, form only parts of the army which, amidst a din, seeks out its positions. On the other side, the Trojans prepare themselves for battle. Here, alongside Hector, Aeneas is named, who, as the son of a goddess standing in rank above him, begins to step forward more. The Trojans in general are dealt with briefly; Hector, on the other hand, receives through a single trait more visibility than Agamemnon possesses, despite all the detail with which his armor is described.

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Hector, among the first, bore a shield,
Beaming in all directions as in the sky
A ruin-bringing star rises up
And in the dark clouds vanishes again:
Thus was Hector now visible among the foremost,
Now among the last of the army, giving orders,
And it flashed, where he appeared, his shield
Like Zeus’s shining lightning.

How artful. First the poet shows Hector from a distance, then he is here, then he vanishes, then he is there, then he stands close before us, and as if blinded we see the rays cast out by the shield. No ornaments has this shield, only the one quality of being uniformly gleaming like a mirror. This pictorially acting being-now-here-now-there allows Hector, in our feeling, to become the soul of the army in a different way than Agamemnon, and allows the army itself to take shape in a different way than the Greek one into a closed organism which Hector’s will sets in motion. Composed of the most varied nationalities, it submissively yields to the direction of a commander-in-chief, while Agamemnon fights only at the head of those whom he led for himself in his ships to Troy, and beside him the other princes each follow their own judgment. Let us note: the few words with which Homer touches upon Hector here as if in flight testify to a sweep of the imagination which does not carry the poet away in the description of Greek things, and this observation brings again the thought with it as if Homer, in his deepest soul, stood closer to the Trojans than to the Greeks,

although he nonetheless glorifies the latter in a higher degree. Let us examine impartially who among all the players up to this point has our sympathy most for himself: certainly Hector. For him we are in anxiety. For him and his people we wish victory. Paris too stands closer to us than Menelaus, Priam and Hecuba closer to us than Peleus and Thetis, and Andromache is dearer to us than Helen. Such comparisons press themselves forward again and again.

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I note also this.

Already in the fourth canto Homer described the beginning of a battle. How differently he goes to work in the eleventh canto. I do not exhaust the comparison of both cantos here, but point out by how much simpler the eleventh is kept and how different this time are the views which Homer gives of the fight. The constant change of the standpoint from which the things and persons are now shown to us lets them become more vivid. In the arming of Agamemnon, we stand, as it were, in the tent and inspect every piece of weaponry exactly: Hector, on the contrary—as I just now remarked—appears only as an image before us, to give which a few outlines suffice; suddenly he stands close before us, and the brilliance of his shield blinds us. In the beginning of the battle in the fourth canto, the poet placed us in the midst of the throng. Shouting and the clang of weapons ring in our ears from all sides: in the eleventh we see only from a distance what happens. And what a wonderful artistic device with which Homer unites all that into an image: through a single image itself, which is taken from the deepest peace. The enormous labor of mutual destruction is compared with the quietly fulfilling labor of the harvest. As on the field of a wealthy man the reapers strike down barley and wheat and the swaths lie there in long rows, so Greeks and Trojans accomplish their work. Until the hour they work further with equal success on both sides where the woodcutter in the mountains lays the axe from his hand because he hungers. Those, however, do not think of rest from labor, but now, at noon, the Greeks go forward victoriously, and the Trojans are enumerated whom Agamemnon slays.

Again, Homer has a special way of weakening the victories of the king. One after another Agamemnon strikes down two pairs who oppose him, but both times they are very young people, regarding whom one has the feeling the king should, instead of killing them, rather have only made them prisoners so that their fathers might ransom them. Now Agamemnon encounters Hector. But it does not come to a fight between the two, because Zeus sends Iris down with the command to Hector not to inhibit Agamemnon's victory-run so long as until the king has sustained a wound. Only then should Hector break loose with full power. The Greeks would give way, and he would pursue them unto the ships.

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Agamemnon's irresistibly victorious advance receives hereby a new shadow. Now he slays the youthful Iphidamas, whose life-course, as he goes into the war newly wedded, is told so touchingly that Agamemnon again stands there as the one who with one blow destroys the happiness of a family. Once more he has at the same time stood opposite the brother of Iphidamas here, and the revenge of the elder now lets him receive the decisive wound which, according to Zeus's will, was to indicate the turn of fortune. Unnoticed, the brother of Iphidamas approached the king and stabbed him in the arm, where the joint separates upper and lower arm. He heeds the injury not. He hews Iphidamas's brother to the ground and continues to spread death and ruin with lance and sword and hurled rocks, but then the wound begins to pain, and he leaps into the chariot to hasten to the ships. Homer allows it to come to no more than a cold regret with us, while he fully claims our compassion for those whom Agamemnon struck down. It must be pointed out again and again how Homer remains constant in this treatment of both Agamemnon and Menelaus. However little it emerges in the individual encounters, this procedure becomes so striking when we, summarizing the content of all twenty-four cantos, let the individual cases form a chain. I know no other poet who weighs every word with so much intentionality and at the same time under the appearance of impartiality. Goethe's Tasso testifies to a similar mastery over imagination and language. One could say every word in this poetry was written in consideration of all else. We know, however, also what uncommon labor

Goethe bestowed upon Tasso. If we consider the Iliad and Odyssey from this point of view, there would result quite colossal critical labor by Homer on his work, an activity which, according to our concepts, would likely have claimed a long human life.

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Agamemnon, then, is done for, and Hector’s successes take their beginning. The Greeks feel immediately that a reversal occurred and that Zeus’s will brought it about. Of the other princes, as long as Agamemnon followed his victory-run, there had been no talk; after Agamemnon’s disappearance, the becoming-incapable-of-battle of Diomedes now forms the center of the report, a piece which in brilliance, vividness, and suspenseful progress equals the tenth canto. Paris’s, one cannot say "treacherous," arrow-shot—for Trojans and Greeks alike use bow and arrow as an honest weapon—acts like the echo of the murder committed upon Rhesus and his people. We expected a revenge for this deed.

Diomedes had, we saw it, a feeling that the day was lost; nevertheless, his bravery, inflamed to fury, lets the battle come into balance again. He and Hector encounter each other. The narrative becomes, from the entry of Hector onward, like a storm-wind. Homer employs one of the means peculiar to him. While in the preceding cantos the comparisons had almost vanished, they are now abundantly poured out again, and indeed they limit themselves, as also further on, almost exclusively to the lion, who is woven into the battle-report as vividly as if a great battle of men and lions were raging together.

Four times Homer compares Agamemnon with the lion. As the lion, breaking into the lair of the stag, tears the young with his teeth and the hind is unable to help them, but rather, trembling with fear, flees through the forest, so the Trojans are unable to bring any help to the young son of Priam when Agamemnon strikes him down. And when then the sons of Antimachus fall victim to him, Agamemnon throws himself like a lion upon them, and when he has driven the Trojans before him unto the Scaean gate, like a lion scares away young cows in the "twilight hour of milking" and from one, whom he has seized, tears the entrails out of the body.

And finally, when Agamemnon hews down Iphidamas, he grips like a lion. In all these comparisons, not as in other places the nobler, spiritual qualities of the lion, but only his unmerciful murder-lust are drawn into comparison. Also in the following comparisons only the Greeks are compared with lions, most grandly where the wounded Odysseus, after Diomedes's wounding, has to defend himself alone against the Trojans—the passage will be spoken of presently, and I anticipate it—where he is compared with the stag hit by the hunter, who escapes fleeing, but then, as his strengths fail, collapses and falls victim to the jackals who tear him "deep in the shady grove." But a daemon lures a lion hither, the jackals scatter apart, and to him the prey is allotted. The image of the murdering lions mingles, I repeat it, with that of the combatting men; it is as if they intervened. Fire and sea and storm-wind Homer adds; in two comparisons following close upon one another with the wind churning up the waves of the sea, Hector's advance is depicted as the Achaeans then begin to flee. Odysseus, fighting beside Diomedes, opines it is time to withdraw. Diomedes's answer we know in advance: to be sure, Zeus is against them, but endure he will nonetheless. And the highest god himself is impressed by this resistance. The Achaeans turn again to the fight. Diomedes's terrible lance-thrust lets Hector, retreating into the throng, sink fainting to the ground among his people. Already once Homer (in the fifth book) used the same verses to paint the fall of Aeneas. Voss translates:

> And he sank down kneeling and propped the sinewy right hand
> Against the earth; and the eyes the dark night drew round him. [1]

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[1] In Voss (5, 309) — sank
Forward on the knee and propped the sinewy right hand
Against the earth; and the eyes the dark night drew round him.

Monti says:

> Qui cadde su i ginocchi, puntellando
> Contro il suol la gran palma, e tenebroso

Su le pupille gli si stese un velo.

It seems to me as if these verses had perhaps prescribed the position which the unknown Pergamenian artist bestowed upon the Dying Gaul. Not (— so that no misunderstandings arise! —) as if this statue were to represent Hector, or as if it were worked after an existing statue of Hector, or as if Homer himself had had a statue of this version before his eyes, but only as if the Pergamenian artist could have remembered the Homeric verses. I note here at the same time that Homer's views, although indeed Phidias also took verses of Homer as the starting point for his Zeus, contain little that is sculptor-like. He seems rather to see the world with the eye of a painter, a colorist who works with great masses of light and shadow and separates foreground, middle-ground, and background. The scenes of the Iliad have throughout not the bas-relief-like quality in which later Greek art lets them appear; they are also not felt like the vase paintings which modern scholarship would like to impress upon today's youth as that which corresponds most to the original national view. They point toward a pictorial conception, thus toward an art of which nothing remained. In the Odyssey, this colorfulness emerges particularly. Of this there was already talk, and I shall return to it. Light and dark play a role in the Odyssey. Nausicaa and Penelope leave behind even more clearly the impression of painted portraits than Helen and Andromache.

How Hector, after he has lain stunned for a time, then comes so far back to consciousness and strength as to hide himself in the protecting throng of the Trojans, how Diomedes, hit by Paris's arrow-shot, turns to the ships and Odysseus, after he has fought alone for a time, wounded follows Diomedes, forms the content of the report increasing in strength and beauty.

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Of these verses no extract can be given. Every single one of the sinking combatants Homer knows how to make into the main person as long as he tells of him. Everywhere he lets us be there in closest proximity, deeds and images whirl together, an uprising of everything earthly seems to occur. Now the moment has come for the poet to bring Ajax into the foreground as the last hold of the Greeks: the hero of invincible resistance.

Ajax too Homer has allowed to rise in the Iliad with slow stature.

In the first book Ajax is not mentioned, in the second he is named almost alone, but the height of his stature is indicated. In the third book Priam desires to know who that might be, who overspreads all the people with his head and mighty shoulders. In the fourth he belongs to those whom Agamemnon encourages to the fray. Two Aias the army of the Greeks harbors: the Locrian and the Telamonian, who mostly fight together. Concerning their connection Homer says nothing. In the Catalogue of Ships, they are listed separately and to the Telamonian nothing special is attributed, but at the conclusion, in the enumeration of the most excellent, it is expressed that the Telamonian, so long as Achilles was wroth, stood pre-eminent before the Greeks. Before the beginning of the first battle, as Agamemnon, wandering through the army, incites the leaders individually to the fight, he says to the two Ajax, who here with their people form a single, ruin-threatening, dense dark mass: that he had no need to exhort them to the battle: if only the like courage animated everyone in the army! In the single combats which now follow, Ajax is named more often (4, 473. 5, 519. 5, 610, where Ajax is afraid and gives way, 6, 5), until he, in the seventh book, is designated by lot for the duel with Hector. Here for the first time his valor governs the state of things. With giant strides he goes to meet Hector, “smiling with earnest countenance,” and a shudder runs over Hector. This smile amidst dark earnestness (the smile of the Aeginetans) remains the mark of Ajax throughout the Iliad.

And also, in the simple words of his address to Hector, he shows his character: recognition of the opponent, sober self-consciousness regarding his own achievement, modesty. Aias’ opinion is, even if Achilles be missing, there are many others among the Achaeans who could take it up with Hector. Let Hector come on. And now follows the undecided duel of both, which the heralds part because the night broke in. From the eighth book we know (228), that Ajax’ ships occupy the outermost point of the camp toward the one side; later then it is shown in the liveliest aspect how the Locrian Aias, holding himself as a bowman close beside the Telamonian, is covered by the latter’s shield. In the ninth book Aias and

Odysseus go as envoys to Achilles. Concerning Aias' speech there, mention has already been made. His heart speaks and Achilles understands him. We feel how he listens to Aias' speech more than to those of his companions. Aias' way is to hold back his words, but if once it is necessary to speak, then to pull no punches. Also has it been pointed out how Aias at first addresses his words not to Achilles but to Odysseus, as if it were futile to still speak to Achilles himself, and how he, seized by the feeling that their mission was a failed one, suddenly with touching plea then nevertheless turns to Achilles and addresses him. This change of address is a beautiful trait of a dramatic kind.

In the tenth book the two Aias are named only as being present. From the eleventh book onward, however, Homer lets Aias appear as the one upon whose enduring valor the well-being and woe of the Greeks depend.

Let us observe how Homer, as he brings Ajax into this decisive position, has occasionally already mentioned all the character traits of the hero. In increasing succession, so that the more important always becomes the later, he has scattered these traits throughout the poem. He has let the feeling awaken in us that a great scene is preparing, where from Aias the decisive action will proceed. If we now compare how carefully Homer prepared scenes of this kind with the other heroes, we have to examine how he went to work with Aias here.

Aias is chosen for the purpose of staying the victorious course of Hector. Zeus has the intention to let Hector be victorious for the time being; two circumstances, however, are always able to make Zeus' resolves of this kind waver: the exceeding of a certain limit which is prescribed to the victor and which he always has to maintain, and the personal worthiness of those against whom the victory is promised, the consideration due to valor. A kind of sense of propriety had in this sense almost compelled Zeus to let Agamemnon be victorious until midday. Diomedes' tremendous bravery had furthermore been a reason to limit the advance of the Trojans even against him. Odysseus stayed him for the third time. When now this one too is wounded, Ajax appears. He too was permitted to leave the place of

combat only if something unavoidable compelled him. Three times already had the poet used wounds for this; another means had to be found to make Aias incapable of battle.

The manner in which Homer draws Aias into that part of the battle which he brings closest to our eyes belongs to the most brilliant passages of the Iliad. How Odysseus, left alone by Diomedes, wounded, but nevertheless fighting on, thrice roars for help. [1]

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[1] Each hero has his own battle-cry.

How Menelaus, who hears him, at the third cry breaks through with Aias to Odysseus. How the latter, only now yielding to his wound, mounts the chariot to hasten away into the camp. How Aias then first brings the battle again to a standstill and then the Trojans to a retreat.

> And as the stream, which swollen by snow and rain
> In winter from the mountains comes down
> And with oak-branches and pine-trunks
> Mud and rubble in murky floods rolls along
> Far into the sea, so Aias drove over the plain
> Chariots and men, boring himself into the midst.

Hector, who fights against the Achaeans at another place, knows nothing of it and even when he hears of Aias' raging labor, he dares not step against him, because Zeus' will forbade attacking the stronger one.

Zeus therefore would have been in embarrassment toward the irrepressible Aias to carry through his own resolve, that Hector should be victorious, had his omnipotence not had means at its command to bid Aias halt. One of those double-beings who, wavering between form and formlessness as the carriers of his immediate commands, are always at his hand, he sends down to Aias.

Had a happy accident but given us, instead of the verses of the oldest Iliad-redaction preserved on the remains of the papyrus, which contain four

lost verses more, the next thirty, then it would perhaps be possible to establish whether before and after verse 544 likewise verses have been lost. I cannot think, in view of Homer's way of announcing beforehand important things that are to happen, that he did not more broadly execute the moment itself where Zeus sends down "Fear" to Aias. So carefully had the poet prepared this magnificent moment, so richly has he exploited it afterward: why does he, where Fear now began to operate, almost only intimate it? Why does he not describe how Zeus calls Phobos, the son of Ares, Fear, or rather the god of the terror urging to flight, gives him the commission what is to be done, and how the demon then in the midst of the battle-turmoil falls upon Aias? Once already has Phobos been named without being described (4, 440), and also later he remains without description. In other places Homer's imagination delights in painting the nature and the sight of these gods wavering between embodiment and mere concepts and in depicting their irresistible power: it is striking that at this important place he contents himself with a single verse. We do not know, to be sure, whether the words in which we read verse 543 of the eleventh book did not perhaps have a monumental ring escaping us, which for the ear of the Greeks enclosed all that whose broader execution I should like to demand. The sight, how the strongest among the Greek heroes, the unshakable Aias, powerless toward the strange, paralyzing feeling which he suddenly within himself as a ruling power perceives, becomes weak, how he powerlessly hesitating turns to flight, belongs to those which only Homer is able to offer.

Once already, in the fifth book (623), had Homer interrupted the advancing victorious course of Aias by letting him be afraid. Aias wants to strip the armor from Amphios, whom he has struck down. His shield hangs full of Trojan javelins: it moves him not; suddenly, however, the press of the Trojans becomes too strong for him: fear fills him and he gives way backward. At that time, however, this fear had been only the fruit of a quiet consideration which let it appear advisable to him to withdraw; quite differently does it overmaster him now. Only Zeus was able to fill the hero with this kind of fear.

But Zeus sent into Aias' soul the fear.
Stiff he stood. Throwing the shield upon his back,
He retreated trembling, his glances wandered
Searching around, as in small steps
Before the pursuers a beast of prey softly pushes away.
As the lion from the enclosure of the cattle
Dogs and herdsmen, keeping watch through the night,
Scare away; and he, lusting after the flesh,
Would fain approach, and ventures against the spears
Which strong fists hurl against him,
And the flaming brands yet not forward,
And so he goes back, however much he thirsts for blood,
And as the day dawns, he withdraws murmuring sideways. [1]

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[1] Voss and Monti use too many words here, it seems to me.

This first comparison is immediately followed now by a second, still livelier one, one of the most genial at the same time which the Iliad contains. For what Homer wished to embody in Aias becomes clear from it first. Aias is the bearer of unshakability. When he broke through to Odysseus and had finally reached him, it was said: like a tower he had stood with his shield beside him. Aias is insensible against the onslaught of the enemies. He is the hero of enduring resistance.

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And as a donkey in the thickly standing fruit-field
Slowly going forward into the grain deep
Eats his way down to the ground, and there wish
To drive him off the children with sticks —:
Yet they compel him not, the sticks splinter
In two upon his back, for the strength of the children
Is too slight, and they chase him away only
When he has eaten his fill: so swarmed around
The mighty Ajax the Trojans,
Aimed with their lances at his shield [1]

In the middle thereof and were upon his heels;
And at times remembering his strength
He made a turn and scared the enemies away,
And then he turned around again to flight.
Yet the way to the ships he kept barred
Standing between the Greeks and the Trojans.
Full of spears hung the mighty shield upon him,
Other spears, which reached him not,
Stuck in the ground, trembling with desire
To bore themselves into the blooming flesh of him.

Let us note how Homer depicts the conflict between the innate inextinguishable heroism and the cowardice which then only overwhelms it like a disease. Two comparisons show the states which, alternately, now the one, now the other, master Ajax: fear, but that of a lion, and the composure which regards the attacks no higher than a grazing donkey the blows from children's hands. [2]

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[1]) That hangs upon his back!

[2]) *mnêsasketo — erêtusaske — trôpasketo*, to express the recurrence of this change of feeling.

Homer has come in the representation of these things a good deal past the middle of the eleventh canto and now brings a means into application to bestow fresh suspense upon the composition, which, never yet used by him in this manner, is familiar to the newest epic of our days and appears so thoroughly modern that one hardly understands it as a special artistic device within the Iliad: he leads the occurrences to the point that we expect Ajax's succumbing as the next event, but instead of telling further how it occurs, breaking off, he suddenly leaves us in uncertainty whether it occurs at all.

With a leap he turns away from Ajax and from the battle at the outermost end of the Greek fortifications toward Ilion, to the ships of Achilles lying far distant at the outermost other end of the camp, whither the din of the

fight hardly penetrates. Where silence reigns. Where Achilles with the feeling of the events in his heart awaits the moment that one turns to him, seeking help, as the last savior. This transition, considered purely technically, has been admirably accomplished by the poet. One thinks of a wild turmoil of sound borne by the entire orchestra suddenly sinking into silence in order to create space for a simple, sadly magnificent melody executed by only a few violins. Homer commands over us. He guides us whither he will, and we follow him. In the midst of the most burning participation for the wearying Ajax and the retreating army of the Greeks, he lets at that moment another feeling grow up in us which completely occupies us. And just as suddenly he tears us back later into the fight. Only Shakespeare was able, alongside Homer, to shape transitions so violently and so beautifully. And how simply Homer accomplishes that.

Let us hear.

Ajax, in high distress, is finally supported by Eurypylus and his host. Eurypylus, however, himself then hit by Paris, must depart from the engagement. Going, he exhorts his people to stand by Ajax. Now, however, Nestor also leaves the battle in order to lead the wounded Machaon into the camp.

> So now they fought on, as fire burns on,
> But also Nestor the sweat-bathed
> Horses bore away from the fight, from which he Machaon,
> The wounded prince, wished to lead away;
> Him Achilles recognized! For upon the height
> Of his mighty ship standing, he followed
> Looking far out, how the tear-arousing
> Wrestling of the fight and din of the battle pressed near.
> And down from the ship he called Patroclus,
> His comrade, by name. Who in the tent
> Heard the call and came. Like the god of war he came,
> And it was the beginning of his destruction.

> Why do you call upon me and of what is there need?

But Achilles: Now, I believe, will the Greeks
Seeking help clasp my knees,
For now the necessity presses them, which nothing more stops.

How simple Achilles' reintroduction! Few words suffice the poet to lead us back into the higher circle of interest, which immediately encompasses us again as the decisive one.

Let us note how Homer in these verses proclaims in advance the fate of Patroclus, whose death we, even before the fights begin in which he will conquer and sink, get to know through other repeated pointings as the unalterably imminent. We have already seen in other cases how the pre-proclamation of death is an indispensable auxiliary means for Homer to move those fellow-players of the Iliad spiritually quite close to us upon whose intervention the final development of the great events rests. Patroclus belongs to them. The mourning for his loss moves Achilles to reconcile with Agamemnon and to enter the battle again.

Patroclus had until then hardly been named. He went along insignificantly beside Achilles. We do not expect his entry into the fight as something that would save the cause of the Greeks. Now, however, we admire Homer's art in letting him gradually grow into things. At the reception of the embassy to Achilles he was the silent participant performing only domestic services. No utterance breaks through his almost insulting reserve. This was the well-calculating preparation with which Homer resolved to set us into a relationship to Patroclus. We shall soon now experience that this falling-silent was only appearance, that a soul lives in Patroclus. Everything commonly human the poet seeks to keep far from this sublime figure; he surrounds him with a reflection of the divinity radiating round Achilles. Ever more impatiently we await the sight of the fighting Achilles, of whose deeds until then, as of something lying before the beginning of the poem, account had indeed only been given in the Iliad. The hour of the reversal nears.

But Homer lets it enter slowly. We are to be prepared step by step for the deeds which Achilles will accomplish. The first step had been that the

previous heroes of the Greeks must prove themselves as elements from whom a rescue was not to be expected. In all, too much of the human is mixed in. The second step now is the appearance and the downfall of Patroclus. Patroclus's heroism forms the bridge to the re-entry of Achilles.

With Agamemnon, Odysseus, Diomedes, Ajax, Nestor, Patroclus has nothing in common. He originates from a higher layer of mortals. He stands entirely in ideal views. With his entry into the fight, the exertions and successes of those others are almost as if done for. One hardly remembers them anymore. Our interest wakes up as if anew. Achilles shows himself as the target point of our expectation.

The episode of Patroclus within the Iliad is only then fully understandable if we weigh how he, as a heroic nature, as a character, as a work of art for itself, occupies the middle between Achilles and Diomedes. Without the looking toward these two, he would have almost something blurring: as soon as we place them as bearers of a More and a Less beside him, he gains however individual existence. The way in which Patroclus subordinated his own feeling, without yet disavowing it, to that of Achilles, had until then dampened our participation in him: the first thing Homer does, where he now introduces him as the main person, is to rehabilitate him in this direction. We shall perceive with admiration how. Insignificant traits gain significance here. Already this may be noted, that while Achilles, standing upon the ship, seeks to grasp what is occurring with his looks, Patroclus is not with him, but keeps himself shut up in the interior of the tent. As if he did not wish to look upon the things whose sad turn moves him deeply. Now Achilles calls him hither and sends him out to learn in the camp whom Nestor just drove hither on his chariot as a wounded man: it seemed to be Machaon.

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With how sure a hand the poet draws here the beginning turnaround of Achilles, who no longer bears the role to which he condemned himself to play. Whom inner impatience lets ascend the height of the ship in order to look out. To whom it is evidently less a matter of Machaon than of news about the state of things in general. We see him standing there and awaiting the return of Patroclus. And in order to increase the feeling of this

expectation in ourselves, Homer employs the means in the handling of which he is the great master: he delays the message of Patroclus. More than once already Homer let talkative old men take the floor and in broadly extending discussions make us ever more impatiently demand a return to the report of the facts. Nestor, who led Machaon into the camp, must bring it about that Patroclus, impatient to return to Achilles, be now held fast by endlessly spinning-on tales. The scene now playing itself out in the tent of Nestor: on the one side the younger man, under whose soles it burns, on the other the old man, whom reverence commands to listen, who tells from his youth-times, belongs in the realm of the finest comedy and grants us anew the permission to believe in the existence of a developed scenic poetry present in Homer's times, which to the poet of the Iliad himself—what do we know, after all, of him and his time?—was perhaps just as familiar as the handling of the epic form. Let us further note how Homer carefully builds up the stage of this scene before our eyes before he lets it begin. It is as if the poet were rightly concerned to make us impatient through the content-rich tales of Nestor. As if he spread out all this detail of scenic externalities before our eyes with a kind of malicious joy. And at the same time Nestor speaks so comfortably, so vividly, so pictorially clearly, that he makes us participate in these things against our will and almost forget how at the same time before the Greek camp there is fighting with terrible exertion and that only the lastly yet wearying Ajax keeps back the storming Trojans from the ships of the Greeks.

This way, in moments of such pressing danger, of concentrating our interest upon the chatter of an old man, shows the almost exuberant power of a poet who felt sure of his violence over his public. To the thoroughly rounded-off scene nothing is lacking to figure in a work of Molière or to fill out a modern novel chapter. And now we remember how Homer, according to the same recipe, had once already created an episode of his poem: the scene where Hector, from the midst of the battle threatening ruin to his father-city, wants to go into the city and, burning with longing to see his wife and his child only for a moment, is held back by Helen's chattering in her palace, and how he only with difficulty extricates himself from her. We shall yet

encounter a third scene of this kind in the Iliad. Shakespeare is filled with such contrasts: Goethe's and Schiller's natures were filled with a certain one-sided earnestness which did not let them rise to such playful handling of their art.

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This way of concentrating our interest upon the chatter of an old man in moments of such pressing danger shows the almost exuberant power of a poet who felt sure of his violence over his public. To the thoroughly rounded scene nothing is missing to figure in a work of Molière or to fill out a modern novel chapter. And now we remember how Homer according to the same recipe had once already created an episode of his poem: the scene where Hector from the midst of the battle threatening ruin to his native city wants into the city and, burning with longing to see his wife and his child for a moment only, is held back by Helena's small talk in her palace, and how he only with difficulty extricates himself from her. We shall yet meet a third scene of this kind in the Iliad. Shakespeare is filled with such contrasts: Goethe's and Schiller's natures were filled by a certain one-sided earnestness which did not let them rise to such playful handling of their art.

And now we admire how Nestor, with the cunning peculiar to his age—just so in the ninth book did Phoenix arrive from seemingly far-distant stories at a stringent application to Achilles—directs his far-spun recollections toward Achilles and finally closes with an exhortation to Patroclus, which brings the latter's innermost nature to awakening and calls forth all that follows. The same poetic technique. The same penetrating acquaintance with the laws of the drama. For until the last moment, where Patroclus, forgetting his impatience with which he is driven back to Achilles, is swept away with increasing warmth into Nestor's thoughts and finally to the resolve to separate his fate from that of his friend and, detached from Achilles, to step forward fighting alone for the cause of the Greeks, there occurs a dramatic, but, as I remarked, a comedically brought-about intensification, from whose effect we cannot withdraw ourselves.

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Let it also be pointed out how differently Phoenix and Nestor conduct themselves. Both are noble men. Phoenix however, unfavorable fates have brought into a semi-serving position, which lends to his speeches something hesitant, groping. They are brought forward with a certain caution. Nestor, on the other hand, as a reigning lord, gives himself up to the feeling of his position. He says to himself: I appear to the young man perhaps tedious, but be it so, I speak on. Circumstances have made Nestor the president of the expedition against Troy, and he claims the prerogatives of his position. And Patroclus respects them. Patroclus is in everything he does a member of the best society. Agamemnon, Odysseus, and Diomedes are heroes, but at the same time men of business; egoism always leaps up in them again; Patroclus has no trace of this disposition.

And now we observe how Homer lets a final confirmation be granted to this feeling of Patroclus already in the eleventh book, with which he concludes him.

Eurypylus it had been who brought Aias to a stand again. Hastening back through the camp to inform Achilles of what had occurred, Patroclus encounters Eurypylus, who, limping forth with difficulty with the arrow in his thigh, claims his aid. From Achilles, whom Chiron instructed, he had indeed learned the art of healing. Again, Patroclus asks after the state of things and receives a mournful account. Although Patroclus is urged to communicate also this latest news to Achilles immediately, it is impossible for him to leave Eurypylus, whom he conducts to his tent, draws the arrow from his wound, and applies pain-stilling herbs. Therewith the eleventh book breaks off.

Twelfth Book

There had been demonstrable up to the eleventh book a planned progression of Homer, and the same proceeding we recognize in the books from the sixteenth to the last. The four intervening books, on the other hand, awaken at many places the feeling of a disorder arisen in their arrangement,

one might almost say, later carried into them. These four books, however, are precisely those in which the revolution prepares itself in Achilles' soul.

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I say "disorder." Thereby it would be excluded that anything in the books was missing. All elements that are required to change Achilles' mind are present. Just as completely is shown in these books the melting away of the Greeks' power of resistance. The will of Zeus determines their defeat, to be sure, only up to a certain outermost point where that of the Trojans takes its beginning, but in the crowding calamity, the belief in this consolation loses itself for us. Depicted are the futile attempts as well of the deities favorable to the Greeks as of those hostile to them to outwit Zeus, since open overmastering leads to nothing. Also missing are not magnificent episodes of the wounding and death of heroic champions. If there were a means to dissolve the four books so that their parts stood at disposal for any desired sequencing, a superior organizational spirit might perhaps be able to produce something that satisfied. Such attempts have also been made. I must content myself with expressing the conviction that unknown circumstances loosened the original structure of the four books.

Four great masses of events are contained in them:

1. The Greeks attack and are at an advantage. Zeus determines the moment where their fortune turns. Their best leaders become incapable of combat. Flight into the interior of the wall where the ships lie.

2. The Trojans attack and are unable at first to scale the wall. The Greeks are brought into the for them new situation of having to defend themselves. The Trojans penetrate over the wall into the camp. It is a question of whether they succeed in setting the ships on fire.

3. The goddesses favorable to the Greeks move Poseidon to step in for them. Zeus is artificially put to sleep by Hera upon Ida. The Greeks come again into advantage. The Trojans are driven forth from the Greek camp. Zeus awakens. Poseidon must withdraw. The Greeks fall anew into the most threatening disadvantage.

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4. Achilles perceives the desperate nature of the situation. In Achilles' armor Patroclus enters the battle with the Myrmidons and drives the Trojans back from the camp to the walls of the city. Patroclus falls. The Trojans, advancing again, storm the Greek camp for the second time and throw fire into the ships. Achilles appears!

For each of these complexes of events, the four books offer sufficient detail. Yet in the way that I tell things here, Homer does not give them. In the manner in which he lets the events follow each other, they form at times a confusion whose artistic impossibility can be demonstrated. In our memory, to be sure, everything then nevertheless fits together harmoniously. One feels driven to attempts to piece the books apart and to bring them into a better arrangement. Is much entirely lost? Who replaces it? My attempts have been fruitless. Perhaps what we have before us in the four books is already the result of ancient aesthetic compromises.

But we shrink from no critical undertaking today: one could attack the work of a restoration of the original from three sides.

First, one would proceed purely according to aesthetic feeling in a rearrangement. Based upon Homer's way of preparing events, it might be said: here or there this and that is intended by the poet; a certain sequence of what happens might accordingly be required. Or else: here something occurs that has not been prepared in Homer's manner; preparatory verses must therefore be lost.

The second way would be to remove what is seemingly interpolated and to actually fill seemingly existing gaps, as has been attempted by me earlier.

The third: to assume a confusion of in themselves incoherent fragments and to seek out and connect those belonging together.

One could thereby start from experiences which newer poems offer. Goethe's narrative poems and dramas allow at times Goethe's own later rearranging hand to be recognized. We see how he takes away, adds,

changes the plan. We observe how apparent gaps in his poems did not arise through the later intervention of foreign hands, but how a seemingly smooth text was formed through the intervention of a foreign hand. *Götz* Goethe remodeled thrice, *Werther* once; upon *Faust* he undertook remodeling his whole life long. [1]

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[1] Whereupon I once pointed out to Scherer, concerning Homer.

Goethe reports himself concerning his procedure maintained with *Faust*. We also read how he took apart existing manuscript for *Wilhelm Meister*, had it bound with empty pages interleaved, and waited for favorable moments. We know how Klopstock subjected the beginnings of the *Messias* to remodeling. In Homer's text the matter could then have lain so that various redactions from Homer's own hand circulated and that under Pisistratus one sought to connect the collected fragments of these four books.

The times of Pisistratus lay far enough from those of Homer. How near lie ours to those of Goethe. The stylistic peculiarities of a young, middle, and old Goethe to distinguish has no difficulty. If in the same work, however, all styles run through one another! Assuming there had in his time also been a young and an old Homer, which latter reworked the Iliad, as Alessandro Manzoni in his age wrote the *Promessi sposi* anew: already in Pisistratus' times these different redactions could have flowed into one another without a way out being found. And now indeed to wish to undertake this distinction today!

The following view has formed in me. Present seem to be the genuine components of the four books, so that to them perhaps only through omissions could the form be given back in which they, as the center of the Iliad, would occupy a worthy position. The impossible part of this task however, might lie in the following.

The remaining books of the Iliad allow it to be recognized that Homer set himself in every book a new problem of artistic treatment, in the manner

roughly as Raphael in each of his main paintings undertook to shape something new in respect to composition as well as technique. It urged him to progress. Raphael had such a richness of ideas that from the sketches for his individual compositions there results a succession of new conceptions that sets one in astonishment. I have demonstrated how in the *Disputa* he never did enough for himself and finally in some things returned to quite early thoughts.

Thus, nothing remains but to leave the four books as they are handed down, and to express the doubts rising upon their consideration. —

As the content of the twelfth book, we expect the attempts of Patroclus to spur Achilles to the rescue of the Greeks, or at least, as Nestor suggested, to obtain for himself the permission to be allowed to participate in the battle in his armor, thus in Achilles' apparent form. But still the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth books and the first part of the fifteenth lie, heavy with events, in between, until Patroclus, stepping forth from the tent of Eurypylus, seeks Achilles out only again. If we calculate that Patroclus negotiated for an hour with Nestor and the healing of Eurypylus in the latter's tent again lasted an hour, there would lie within these two hours a fullness of events that would seem impossible to compress into so little time. The question arises: are these events dispensable for the whole, and are they told differently than the rest?

The pervading main interest of the poem lies in the spiritual development of Achilles. Achilles is the main person; as powerfully as he, no other character of the Iliad seizes us. Upon him falls the fullest light. With what art does Homer at fitting opportunities weave in the early history of Achilles, so that he stands before our eyes from earliest childhood. Reference was already made to this above.

Seemingly unintentionally, in the way that real life betrays the individual phases of those with whom we live together, Homer lets it come to light how Achilles as a child, as a boy, as a youth, and before Ilion further up to the hour where we learn to know him himself acting, had behaved. His person is familiar to us through this occasional returning to him, and also

his full future we learn through ahead-running intimations, so that we know it up to his death without this being presented to us in the Iliad.

How does the poetic configuration of Achilles relate to the question of the content of the four books?

Beside Achilles, Homer brings other humans as well as gods upon the scene, and also their development seizes us more or less. Should Homer let Patroclus already at the beginning of the next book return to Achilles and then first Patroclus, and then Achilles, claim our participation so completely as is the case later from the fifteenth book onward, a series of other persons would be interrupted and shortened in their development. Aias, Hector, Aeneas, and Sarpedon be here named: Zeus, Hera, Athena, and Aphrodite of the gods. These figures Homer let enter in the earlier books with the claim to broader development: they would, conceived as characters, not receive the expansion in external as in internal fate if the mass of material of the middle four books were withdrawn from the poem. But also, Achilles would thereby lose a part of the background that lends his fate such high visibility. In short, something would be missing in the poem, a lack of equilibrium would emerge, a lack of counterweight.

Shakespeare's dramas have the property of doing justice to the demands of the drama as of the epic. This peculiarity of the poet lets him appear precisely more related to Homer than to other poetic artists. [1]

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[1] The career of the Shakespearian plays in Germany, where during the first half of our century they worked almost only as book dramas, rests upon this double form, which is peculiar neither to the Greek nor the French dramas, but which Schiller's and Goethe's dramas likewise possess, because their authors, beside the stage effect, considered in the first row the impression which these works would have without performance only upon the imagination of the reader. Just so it was with Lessing's dramas.

Thus, also Raphael bears for a great part something in himself which we could designate as a combination of epic and drama.

Let us consider, for example, the composition of *Hamlet* with regard to the persons who appear beside Hamlet. Hamlet claims our interest beforehand; to the secondary figures, however, the space is granted to develop in the revolution of their fates. Each has its own high point and pursues the way up to it before our eyes. Hamlet then partially steps back, but never so completely as Achilles at times in the Iliad, for the stage demands more strongly Hamlet's presence, and the difference between what occurs visibly on the theater and what is only reported emerges little in the epic. Let us now assume, however, that in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, as in the French tragedy, as good as everything that does not concern the main person were cut back, so that Hamlet almost always governed the scene: he himself would in this case become more void of content. The presentation of a series of fates beside his own always throws new light back upon him. From every side something grows toward him. Without having him himself before us, we relate the otherwise occurring things around him to him, and through the doing of the others his nature becomes more intelligible to us. Therefore, Shakespeare's tragedy is filled with elements which sustain the straight development of things. We never forget whither the course of events moves forward, but always encounter new obstacles which sustain the entry of the final effect and necessitate the road to mere bends and loops hither and thither.

As far as time is concerned, the poets proceed with freedom. As their fantastic world requires, they press many facts into short moments and let the times of day and seasons flow into one another. *Wilhelm Meister* is an example of how Goethe, in order to shape the contrast of Philine and Mignon as beautifully as possible, sacrifices probability.

Goethe does not care about those who might perhaps wish to calculate. Years pass, but, as far as my memory reaches, winter never plays a part in *Wilhelm Meister*. The novel proceeds without a single day where it would have frozen. The age of the participants is treated lightly. At the conclusion of the Odyssey the gods give back to Odysseus and Penelope their beauty, in order to let them become glad in the youthful strength of regaining. The reader, however, is hardly aware how time and space are played with.

Would it have been possible that Ophelia's brother had received the news of his sister's death so quickly in Paris and had hastened back to Elsinore? He must simply appear, and Shakespeare lets him be there again. But no one notices that. To Homer it is of importance to depict the pressing need of the Greeks as vividly as possible. The increasing wildness of Hector must emerge glaringly and threateningly, so that Patroclus' final appearance upon the battlefield and the revolution which it brings forth be perceived by us in the highest degree as a redemption. Toward this Homer went with all means. The creation of this single high effect let the other become a secondary matter. Ophelia's brother must also for the reason be there again to provide a contrast against Hamlet: healthy rage over against sickly considerations. Shakespeare's dominating intention is to show the progress of the internal spiritual decomposition of Hamlet; to this purpose he makes the organism of the tragedy subservient, and we take what he offers submissively. Homer felt at the end of the eleventh book that it required, before he let Patroclus and, after him, Achilles enter again, for the attainment of the whole effect at this place of the Iliad an immense mass-development. He composes it. To appease the impatience of his public, which demands Achilles' appearance, he applies the effective means of not letting it come to rest. Then he breaks off, in order to surprise through new violences.

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The battle takes on more impersonal, elementary force. The fight at the ditch, the bursting of the gate, the throwing in of the first firebrands form the great intensification. "Battle for the Wall" the Greeks call this book. The gods soon enter afresh, and their conduct conditions, as in the earlier books, the earthly successes and failures again immediately. The wandering in the Olympian palaces, the spirit of revolt against Zeus can no longer be held back: Zeus' authority is bypassed, he succumbs to the intrigues of his immortal family. Stroke upon stroke the events change in heaven and on earth, and the general disorganization of the divine economy prepares itself, of which Homer has need in the later books to equip the battle-turmoil, in which he finally lets Achilles himself appear, with unheard-of new fairy-tale effects. Homer's power of invention emerges admirably in the preparation

of these last events. We must consider what had already been performed by him in the preceding books! He never repeats himself. Always new, precisely represented scenes of death, of wounding, of flight, of attack he gives, none among them that would correspond to one of the earlier; again must lion and wild boar provide comparisons given with hunter-like detail, so that we see lions and boars, as before, as it were participating in the combat. The storming sea, the tearing-away floods of the swollen stream, clouds and fire unceasingly perform services and, as before, into the midst of this wrestling for death and life the poet places light-filled, gold-shimmering, idyllic-colossal, frivolously amusing divine scenes, as if we saw Watteau painting colorful comedy scenes in the style of Louis XV. upon the marble walls of the Parthenon, and Rococo flourishes competing with the noblest marble. Let us consider what it means, after all that the eleven books of the Iliad have brought until then, to start once more as if the dance were only now to begin. Homer, as poet of the four books from the twelfth to the sixteenth, presents the sight of an almost exuberant power.

He felt it was, in order to carry the things so far that Hector's last fates and Achilles' raging against the Trojans should once more as novelties govern the scene, necessary to let the figures of the Iliad, whose activity had not yet been presented in the breadth corresponding to their significance, each now only beforehand still come to their right, and therefore consecrates these four books mostly to the personalities who have been enumerated by me.

Hektor rules in the twelfth book.

Hektor's destruction is decreed, this we know. I say decreed, insofar as the poet grants the heavenly powers the right to predetermine earthly fates. Personal guilt must always first be added. Before his downfall, Hektor was to be granted a period of boundless exertion of strength, as a compensation, as it were, for what finally comes upon him; and the four books serve this purpose primarily. We have become too closely acquainted with Hektor for him to be allowed to sink gradually into a mere extra. He, as the personification of the attack, and Aias, as that of the epitome of heroic defense, stand opposite one another as the most noble elements. Our

attention is mostly directed to the advance of the Trojans from position to position, and to the retreat of the Greeks. The consideration of the particular is subordinate to this general view. The task is to depict the ebb and flow of the struggle between the two peoples. Until then, the battle had only been an encounter from both sides on the ground of the battlefield lying between the city and the camp. They clashed in individual groups from morning until evening, only to eat, sleep, and strike anew the next day: now, however, the fighting was to be carried on without pause until Hektor's downfall: so that, when Patroklos and Achilles leaped into the battle, not only the shift in their disposition but the pressing necessity of the Greeks compelled them. For this, he required an indestructible go-getter, such as Hektor was. A hero who at the same time, as a commander, surveyed the situation; one of those, as we would say today, educated soldiers.

Let us note how this again corresponds to the position of the Trojans in general, who stood there also in this respect as the civilly more finely organized society. Homer holds fast to this difference and points it out. And so Homer has composed the twelfth and thirteenth books from the side of the Trojans, and the rampart surrounding the Greek camp is the scene, whose actual existence is made into the real main subject in the introduction to the twelfth book by an—I find again and again only the one word—admirable turn. This passage of the Iliad belongs, according to its invention, to the most ingenious. How would it be possible, according to our thoughts and experiences, that the imagination of any other poet could have produced these first sixty verses? I seek to render their content.

Twelfth Book.

So now Patroklos healed the arrow-wounded
Eurypylos in the tent. But
Trojans and Greeks raged on wildly together
And neither the ditch nor the wall,
Which they drew so wide around their ships,
Should grant anyone protection any longer. For they had,

When they built the wall and the ditch,
Not sacrificed to the gods, that they might
Guard the ships, but without prayer and sacrifice
The work was done and went to ruin.
True, as long as Hektor and Achilles
And Priam's citadel were still upright,
The wall stood; yet at the end of things,
When the Trojans had fallen in battle
And the bravest of the Greeks lived no more,
Priam's towers fell in the tenth year
And the fleet of the Greeks had long been back,
Then Apollo and Poseidon considered
To destroy the wall. And they guided
All the rivers that stream from Ida,
Against the wall that the Greeks built.
Rhesos, Heptaporos, Karesos, Rhodios,
Grenikos and Aesepos and Skamandros,
And Simois, in whose waves so many

Helms and armor and bodies of heroes once
Rolled together in whirlpools toward the sea:
All had to flow against the rampart.
And so Zeus rained down for nine days,
To wash it into the sea, incessantly,
But Poseidon with his mighty trident
As master of the devastation tore the beams
And the stones down, until the waves
Again oversanded the shore of the Hellespont,
Only then did he let the clear floods of the rivers
Flow softly as before down to the sea. —
So, what once lay in the future! But now
The battle surged around the well-fitted structure,
And from the towers the spears whizzed down.
For the Greeks fled to the ships

Fearing Hektor, who taught them what flight means.
The latter, however, as the storm-wind turns about itself,
Even as over against dogs and hunters
The lion turns hither and thither!
Who stand around him closed like a tower,
Brandishing their spears at him; but his heart knows
No fear, he goes forward, and where he attacks them,
They give way! So Hektor, turning himself all about,
Calls to his men to take the ditch.
But the fiery horses dare it not,
Neighing they stand there at the high bank,
For the ditch is wide and deep and offers
Nowhere itself for a leap or for wading through.
For on both sides the slope is
Steep, and driven-in sharp stakes
Protect it, and on the height stand the Greeks.

Thus the introduction with its glance into the far future and the return to the present. Let us note how Homer in the first verses points to that conclusion of the seventh book, somewhat incoherently attached in its place, with which what follows later was to be touched upon for the first time only fleetingly. Already then he has the future destruction of the rampart in view.

It is now described how, upon Polydamas' advice, the Trojans leave the chariots to force the crossing on foot. How they go in five companies against the gate, which the Greeks still held open, and how the battle there breaks out anew.

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Homer overflows with comparisons and interrupts his report with their elaborateness. The more pressing the situation becomes on both sides, the more calmly the river of his speech flows. Nothing breathless in it. No attempt to narrate in broken sentences. Thus the progress of the action until the moment where Hektor bursts the gate with a mighty block of rock,

around which the battle concentrates, and, while the Trojans penetrate the camp, the Achaeans flee to the ships.

In the manner of the narration, the beginning of this book resembles the best passages of the Iliad. In the comparisons—almost every one with its own dramatic turn—we note the professional accuracy with which the captured moments of nature observation have been adapted to the situations, so that each comparison belongs only to the place it illustrates. Often Homer seems to want to repeat earlier comparisons, but almost never —only a few cases in the entire Iliad, where he repeats himself literally, are to be excepted—does he do so. This has often been spoken of, as well as the fact that he heaps up comparisons of different kinds for the same moment. One thing I have observed in this book which is new: Homer's desire to prepare for what is to come later is so great that he gives in to it even with the comparisons. In verse 155 we read how he describes the defense of the wall by stones hurled down.

> Like snowflakes sink down to the earth,
> Which the blowing wind, shaking the clouds,
> Drives thickly down upon the flower-sprouting field,
> So the air was heavy with missiles,
> Which the Trojans and the Achaeans threw.

We have here one of the shorter comparisons without its own dramatic turn. A hundred and some verses later, however, Homer takes it up again. I give Voss's translation:

> There, even as snowflakes come along in a thick flurry
> Falling on a winter day, when Zeus the ruler sets himself,
> To snow over men, sending the arrows of omnipotence;

> Now then he commands the winds, and pours forth restlessly, until he envelops
> The high-crested heads of the mountains, and jagged peaks,
> Also the fields full of clover, and the husbandman's fruitful acres;
> Also the gray sea's fore-shore and bays snow flies around,

But the wave rushing on swallows it up, everything else around
Is from above enveloped, when pressed Zeus's shower falls down:
So from army to army flew more frequent the throng of stones,
Which the Trojans here, and the Danaans there upon the Trojans
Hurled; and around the wall resounded everywhere a dull clattering.

Let us note how the silence of the snowfall is used to represent the rattling of the stones. Precisely by this, that Homer spreads this feeling of silence, the noise of the hurled stones emerges all the more powerfully: highly significant also how he, entirely absorbed in the painting of the scene, paints out the sudden incursion of the rain, so that one could be doubtful whether the actual comparison does not stick therein. Let us well note how above (Verse 155) the winds blow, while here they are silent. Our example is no repetition, but thus a continuation of the above.

We note the art also with which the gradual covering with snow is represented. There comes to my memory a novel by the American Bret Harte, in which the gradual sinking of a landscape into snow is described, also the novella of a Northern poet, in which a description of gradual snowfall occupies a meaningful place. Homer seems here to let himself be enticed by his own memory, since for the comparison itself the wintry state into which he transports us has no value; for it is not a matter of the mass of the stones lying below, but only of their flowing down; only for its own sake does Homer seem to carry out this image so far. [1]

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[1]) I repeat: the peculiar quality of a snowfall is the silence; all the greater the clattering of the stones.

For the mere comparison, what he had given above in Verse 155 would have sufficed. If he gives more here, that could however also perhaps have sprung from the intention to create a spiritual point of rest, whereby the individual moments of the fight are kept apart and reinforced in their effect. I point this out again and again, because only Homer creates and employs his similes in this sense, that they are not, as it were, inserted precious stones, but belong in the metal-flux of the whole.

Also, in this we encounter his hand here again, that he employs the eminently simplest thing to symbolize moments of the wild fight. Toward the end of the canto, he wishes to represent how, despite the enormous exertions from both sides, the fight stands and neither the Greeks give way nor the Trojans advance: no other poet known to me would have composed it thus:

> Everywhere from towers and breastwork trickled red
> Blood, on every side, from Trojans and from Achaeans.
> Yet they did not bring about flight of the Danaans; rather they stood
> Equal: as the balance stands, when a woman, spinning for hire and honest,
> Weighs out wool and weight, and holds the scales both in straight
> Suspension, to win for her children the meager wage:
> Thus stood in equal suspension the battle of the fighting peoples. [1]

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[1] I let Voss intervene everywhere here in order to make quite perceptible how much my merely versified extract falls behind the full-toned hexameters of Voss. Had I wished to make attempts at translation which similarly tried to give Homer's text in the fullness of its richness, that would have been an unnecessary competing undertaking.

Let us note how through the addition "to win for her children the meager wage" this simile, strange in its place, is again raised to a self-contained work of art and made into a resting point of the imagination.

Twice more in this canto Homer seeks to gain pauses by pointing to the most peaceful human intercourse. Verse 417 depicts the furious onslaught of the Lycians under Sarpedon and Glaucus against the wall, where attackers and defenders are separated only by the breastwork rising between them:

> Neither could the Lycians with power the Danaan heroes
> Ever break through the rampart, and open a path to the ships;

> Nor also could with power the Danaans Lycia's sons

> Again press back from the rampart, after they had once approached.
> But as two husbandmen dispute the boundary with one another;
> Each a measure in hand, upon the common limit of the field,
> They stand in small space, and wrangle because of the equalization:
> Thus also did the breastwork separate those. —

And at the close, when Hector bursts the gate with the rock which two men of ordinary stamp with levers would not have rolled from its place:

> As when a shepherd nimbly carries thither the wool of the ram,
> Grasping it in one hand, and little load burdens him:
> So Hector took and carried straight to the planks the field-stone,
> Which closed the gate —

Here the comparison has no independent turn, but affords a closed image; with what pictorial power the peaceful shepherd, carrying the shorn fleece lightly in his hand, presses right into the midst of the throng of the furious fight.

Let us note how this twelfth canto, represented from the side of the Trojans, guides us over from the interest for the succumbing Greeks into the participation for the victorious Trojans, on whose side involuntarily we too stand. With them we press against the wall and await with a certain impatience the storming.

I already pointed out how Homer, to reinforce this interest, affords us new insights into the conduct of war of the Trojans, in that he now more exactly carries out what was earlier generally hinted at. While the Greeks—it was just now being spoken of—fight in individual tribes, so that Agamemnon, although lord and leader of the expedition, functions in battle nonetheless only as the leader of his own people (he would therefore not have had the power to pull Achilles' Myrmidons into the fight without Achilles himself), Hector commands the entire Trojan army, which, for the storming of the rampart divided into five columns of attack, obeyed his commands under various generals. To Hector, as supreme warlord, Polydamas turns with the proposal to leave the chariots at the ditch. Hector concurs with him, and all obey, one single one excepted, with whom it goes ill.

Once more Polydamas turns to Hector with the assertion that a portent hostile to the Trojans forbids proceeding further. Hector however explains the heavenly warning otherwise and threatens Polydamas with death if he speaks further of retreat. At any rate, the way in which he negotiates the matter with Polydamas has something parliamentary. He tries to lead him *ad absurdum*. Certainly, Homer knew exactly the differences in how military duties were treated in Asia Minor and in the Greece lying across the sea.

In this canto Sarpedon appears again. It was already remarked how Homer, where he speaks of him, strikes a peculiar tone. It is as if in the orchestra the violins alone suddenly gain the upper hand. In this canto too Sarpedon stands before us heroically and uninjured, and filled with attacking courage for the fight by Zeus himself, but not without a hint from the poet that, if Zeus here takes his son into special protection against Ajax, he nonetheless cannot always thus ward off death from him. The scene prepares itself which presents Sarpedon’s downfall as one of the most moving events of the Iliad.

There would be yet other signs to cite which let the twelfth canto appear as in connection with the earlier as well as the succeeding cantos and let its indispensability for the entire composition of the Iliad emerge. It is compact, counts fewer than five hundred verses, and has not a single passage where deletions or additions or corruption would need to be thought of.

Of the Greek heroes who oppose the onslaught of the Trojans at the gate of the camp, Ajax’s figure is the only visible one. Homer emphasizes however that in the forcing of the breakthrough at the place where Ajax stands, it is a matter of only one part of the battle, which moreover had broken out along the whole line against the rampart of the Greeks.

Let us well note the commander-like overview with which Homer masters the sum of what is happening. As one of those chess players who,

playing many games at the same time, always know exactly in every game how the pieces stand, Homer always has in view what is going on everywhere at the same time. This gaze of a war-practiced soldier Napoleon well recognized, and drew the conclusion therefrom that Homer must have known war. He says it while drawing Homer into comparison with Virgil, of whom he asserts that he represented the conquest of Ilion not as that of a city, but as that of a fort taken by surprise, and of whom he, as far as his unacquaintance with actual conduct of war is concerned, says such ill things that Saint-Beuve, who honored Virgil and to whom I owe the note, does not print Napoleon's words.

Thirteenth Book

Up to this point, it can be maintained that Homer carried the narrative forward out of the general feeling of the events. From canto to canto, he expands their circle. Always in such a way that he excites the expectation in us that certain things he holds out in prospect must occur, yet at the same time in such a way that he deceives this expectation by the introduction of unforeseen novelties, in order to excite it anew in a more extensive manner. The hallmark of his poetic sovereignty is the—one might say—elegance with which he proceeds. To use a comparison: from canto to canto the number of horses increases which, storming forward, he guides by the reins before his chariot; ever wilder becomes the hunt, but calmly from his height he has every single animal of the team in his eye and knows how to urge it on or hold it back.

At the close of the twelfth canto, the Trojans under Hector have breached the rampart, and the Greeks, abandoning its defense, flee toward the ships. Between the ships and the rampart we must assume an intervening space. The ships lie widely extended upon the height of the shore: we expect the attack upon those lying nearest.

In the camp of the Greeks, it looks thus. The most noble heroes are wounded or occupied with the care of the wounded in their tents. Achilles awaits the message of Patroclus, who instead of returning lingers in the tent of Eurypylus. Of those participating in the battle, only the two Ajaxes and Menelaus are to be named. The Telamonian, under the spell of "fear," incapable of attack, but invincible in resistance. Of the other Greek fellow-combatants, none stands closer to our expectation. We hope, since Achilles finally began to stir, that what happens further will gain progress from him. Twice Patroclus has been prevented from informing Achilles of the increasing disaster: the poet draws this moment further out in order to let it swell more. With the streaming of the Trojans into the camp and the flight of the Greeks, the moment seems finally to have come that one should clasp Achilles' knees, imploring for help.

That, however, which the thirteenth canto now brings, or rather does not bring, surprises us: Homer reports, to be sure, new things, but nothing that expanded our horizon.

Zeus steps in.

Zeus, after the rampart has first been stormed by Hector, leaves the battle at his feet to its fate. Things are to take their course without him. Convinced that the Olympians will not dare to bring help to the Greeks, the father of gods and men turns his looks to another part of his earthly realm: benevolently he lets his eyes rest upon the far-off Thracians and the blameless distant peoples who have to do with the breeding of horses and drink their milk. These moments of inattention Poseidon employs.

Poseidon has until then been shy about intruding into the sphere of interest of his mighty brother. The ruler of the ocean cares little what happens upon the firm land. But he observes. Not from Olympus, but sitting upon the highest mountain peak of Samos, where Troy and Ida (Zeus's momentary residence) and the ships before him lie.

How he now raises himself and in four mighty steps, under which the mountains and the forests tremble, hastens down to the sea; how he,

mounting his golden chariot, so swiftly that the waves do not splash its wheels, hastens to the place from which he enters the camp of the Greeks, is powerfully told. (In distinct repetition of the elements by means of which in the eighth canto Homer let the departure of Zeus from Olympus to Ida be accomplished in such mighty splendor.) Poseidon takes on Calchas's form and stops the fleeing Greeks. And indeed, turning first to the two Ajaxes, whom he addresses and strikes with his mighty staff, whereupon fresh strength and battle-lust fill them.

It seems to me as if in this scene the disenchantment of the Telamonian is to be accomplished, to whom Poseidon, driving the "fear" out of his soul, gives back the old courage of going-at-it. It is striking, however, how much this scene, capable of magnificent painting, moves in general turns and that both Ajaxes are named, since after all only the one comes into question. Ajax the Telamonian now goes over again to the attack. Since we know that he is superior to Hector in strength, we are reassured on this side. However, there lies in the encounter between Ajax and Poseidon, which is equipped with unnecessary conversations, something superfluous in so far as in the previous canto Ajax, through the mere contact with Eurypylus, had already regained his old strength. Here a disorder must rule in the poem. This feeling also presses forward regarding what Poseidon does further. In only general turns, which do not correspond to Homer's urge for realistic treatment even of the lesser facts and persons, it is reported: "Behind at the ships there are those who, instead of participating in the fight, are resting." The poet, who never fails to determine more exactly the place in the camp where something occurs, uses here only the term "behind": we know neither where the scene plays out, nor who participates in it. These Greeks then, who here draw breath because they can no longer go on from weariness, and who, when they see the Trojans break through the rampart, sink down in tears because all is lost, are addressed by Poseidon.

And indeed, seven names are now mentioned: Teucer, the brother of Ajax then; Leitus, one of the leaders of the Boeotians; Peneleos next, likewise leader of the Boeotians; Thoas, the leader of the Aetolians; Deipyros, a Greek without closer designation; Meriones, the comrade of Idomeneus;

and Antilochus, the son of Nestor. This company Poseidon encourages to the fight through a long speech, without our learning whether he succeeds. Only from the now following description of the individual encounters occurring during Hector’s attack upon Ajax do we learn that Meriones and Teucer are involved therein. When things then once more take on a threatening shape, Poseidon returns once again to the camp and to the ships, and here Idomeneus comes to meet him, stepping out of the tent "of a comrade" who lay there newly wounded. Poseidon, in the form of Thoas, thus one of those seven whom he had only just driven back into the fight, addresses him reproachfully: "whither then have all the threats flown, which the Achaeans formerly uttered against the Trojans."

The description of this encounter does not correspond to Homer’s custom: to cite a wounded man of significance, regarding whom he specifies exactly how he had been injured, without naming his name. It is striking, furthermore, that we see "physicians" occupied with this unknown man, who to be sure also appear elsewhere, but not as here, where one expects names. Still more striking, that Idomeneus wants to go into his own tent to arm himself and hasten into the battle? How does it happen that he keeps himself unarmed in the camp, instead of being there where the fighting is?

Idomeneus’s answer to Thoas’s mocking question has no real content. Everyone knows how to fight, no one is afraid, no one is indolent. Zeus’s intention, however, seems to be that the Achaeans perish ingloriously. Thoas should not desist from encouraging all combatants, as indeed he has always done where he saw someone dilatory. Thoas replies, despite this fine speech, that everyone may perish miserably who today does not participate in the fight.

Idomeneus should arm himself and go with him, since two are better than one. Idomeneus thereupon puts on the armor and grasps two lances. On the point of departing, however, he meets Meriones, his comrade-in-arms, asks him whither he hastens, and, upon the answer that he wishes to fetch a fresh lance in his tent, offers him some of his own, whereupon between the two

follows a longer, contentless conversation in which they praise their own martial excellence. Both exchange longer bombastic-sounding speeches once more, before they finally enter into the fight. Poseidon has meanwhile incessantly driven the Achaeans to the strife, and at their head Idomeneus finally storms upon the Trojans, who turn to flight.

A series of combats Idomeneus now undergoes, which fill many verses and end in an encounter with Aeneas, which, although broadly motivated and prepared, dissolves into nothing. Menelaus and Aias, Hektor, Paris, and Deiphobus play roles therein; the things, however, are presented neither vividly nor clearly. With Menelaus it is striking that in throwing his lance he does not hit, as it flies sideways.

At the conclusion of the book, we no longer encounter Poseidon in the battle, which takes a strange turn. Aias Oileus suddenly brings his Locrians, armed with bows, into the fray, whose arrows so confuse the Trojans that they are near to fleeing back to Ilios. In this moment Hektor is approached by Polydamas with the proposal to call together the noblest of the army to deliberate whether one should retreat or attack the ships. With this Hektor is this time in agreement. In the assembly, however, upon a speech by Paris, the resolution is made to attack. Hektor goes forward. Aias steps against him and prophesies his destruction, and a soaring eagle confirms his words. Hektor answers with mighty boasting, and both armies go at one another with a cry. Therewith the book closes. It brings nothing new. The battle stands at the point where it had stood at the end of the twelfth. The twelfth book had something pressing forward.

No superfluous word in it. Richness of invention. Streaming events. Hektor the one from whom the movement proceeds. The thirteenth lacks these advantages. Were it missing entirely, we would feel no gap; the fourteenth book would rather attach itself immediately to the twelfth. Both fit exactly together. Yes, the last verse of the twelfth book seems almost to challenge the first of the fourteenth.

The thirteenth differs also from the other books in that it is written from no definite side: neither the Trojan nor the Greek interest predominates, and

our sympathy is drawn in no decided way neither thither nor hither. The events do not escalate, but range themselves one after another without a goal. Hektor plays an almost indifferent role. The tragic fate of Deiphobus does not grip us deeply enough. The Aias keep themselves at their former height, but without offering new sides. Poseidon's entry as a protecting god is described magnificently, but without visible success. He, who wanted to interrupt Hektor's course of victory and, contrary to Zeus' will, give the cause of the Trojans a sudden turn for the worse, nowhere forms the center of the movement. He decides nothing. His encouragements have something superfluous; they address themselves to people of no consequence. It seems, indeed, as if Homer wanted to grant Idomeneus an *aristeia* here subsequently: all the speeches, however, that Idomeneus holds, and the combats he undergoes, do not make him more visible, but have something blurred despite many details. We do hear for the first time, however, that Idomeneus is already an older man, that in standing combat he is powerful, but in pursuit no longer strong enough in the ankles; of this there had been no talk before. "Near to old age" (with the adjective *μεσαιπόλιος*, occurring here alone) he calls him. That could subsequently explain the much speaking assigned to him in our book, and to this it also corresponds that he later in the twenty-third book does not join in the contests in honor of Patroklos, but sits among the judges.

In the thirteenth book, Idomeneus' high age is, moreover, indifferent. If I account to myself how the flat, hesitating quality in the thirteenth book is to be explained, its present form could have arisen through the fact that existing fragments were incorrectly put together. The beginning with Zeus looking away to the other peoples appears genuine. Genuine the driving out of "fear" from Ajax. Genuinely Homeric seems the mocking of the fallen Othryoneus. Genuine, but fragmentary at the end, the combat of Ajax with Aeneas. Genuine Hektor's flare-up against Paris because of Deiphobus. If we grasp these points, however, as alone Homeric and leave out what crowds in between, even if we imagine a number of gaps filled differently, there still does not arise the appearance of a book for itself. The thirteenth book forms no whole. Mere details join one another. Each could stand in

another place. If we consider that there are fragments to Faust which Goethe himself did not insert into the poem, yet at the same time did not destroy, then one could believe in the existence of Homeric paralipomena.

Perhaps later, when the architectonics of the Homeric books have been repeatedly examined by many and laws have been found according to which the poet proceeded, the attempt may be ventured to accommodate the pieces of the thirteenth book designated as genuine within the other books. The disenchantment of Aias, for example, could be inserted in the fourteenth book where the intervention of Poseidon is spoken of, for at this place one misses something. Also, Poseidon's first entry could find its place only at the beginning of that book. The mocking of the fallen Othryoneus sounds like Diomedes. Also, the indication of Idomeneus' age could stand elsewhere.

In the images of the thirteenth book, that is the most grandiose where, at the advance of the Trojans, Zeus stirs up a cloud of dust rolling toward the Greeks. Equally great is the image of the block of rock torn from the summit of a mountain, leaping down in ever mightier bounds, which at the sandy shore of the sea finally does come to rest.

Who else but Homer could have created that. Hesiod first borrowed it from him. Then Homer's verses were used by Virgil in the Aeneid, then Lucan, then Statius appropriated the image for themselves. Then we find it again in Tasso's Jerusalem Delivered, and finally Manzoni has fashioned an ode from it, in which, however, an old Christian church hymn containing the same thought participated. [1] Homer's oldest version of the comparison is the most beautiful. Again and again, we see in Homer the earliest and the purest source of glorious images. As far as the thirteenth book of the Iliad is concerned, however: let happen to it what will: it is filled to such a degree with verses that only Homer could have composed, that to eject it from the Iliad must appear as an intolerable robbery of the poetry.

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[1] I take this compilation from the second edition of Augusto Romizi's *Paralleli letterari* (Livorno 1892), a book which in modest form contains a

series of substantial references.

Fourteenth Book

Nestor asks Machaon, with whom he sits over wine, whether the din does not seem to be growing louder even to him. Then he arms himself to see for himself how things stand outside and, stepping armed from the tent, perceives the flight of the Greeks and how they are being slaughtered. He sets out to find Agamemnon. On the shore of the sea, distant from the encounter, the latter stands with Diomedes and Odysseus, who, incapable of combat as they were, had come forward leaning on their lances.

Where was that? We often notice how it is Homer's way, when giving descriptions, not to exhaust himself at once, but occasionally to add an explanatory word further on. Around a bay of the sea lie the ships of the Greeks. They have drawn them onto the land in several rows. Close to the shore is one row, where the vessels crowd against one another.

The others lie further up, brought higher onto the land, which, rising like steps, encircles the mouth of the bay. These ships more distant from the sea were enclosed—with a broad space lying between—by the wall and the ditch, from which, at the place toward Ilios where it had been breached, the Greeks now hasten toward the ships. Because the ridge surrounding the bay had been used for the wall, Achilles had been able to see from afar, from his ships, where the fighting was taking place. Homer carried within him a vision of the Greek camp that went into the smallest details. Between the kings, who met by the sea, and the place of combat lay the ships.

Agamemnon had remained invisible for a time as a wounded man; now, in the meeting with Nestor, Homer lets him appear in a manner that lets him seem in an even worse light than everything that preceded. The gods, the Greeks, and Achilles hated him, he addresses Nestor. The latter admits that things stand desperately. A decision must be made. Then Agamemnon

makes the proposal to immediately pull the ships lying closest to the shore into the sea and moor them at anchor: at night one would fetch the rest after them and save oneself through flight. Better off is he who flees an evil than he who lets himself be overtaken by it.

Odysseus looks darkly at the king. A pity, he says scornfully, that a band of wretched fellows is not under Agamemnon's command instead of the Greeks, whom Zeus has taught to fight and to die.

> Silence! That no Greek hears you speak!
> Things you say that no man's lips
> Should speak, who holds his honor high,
> Things that he least of all should say,
> Who bears the scepter over mighty peoples:
> You, whom we all have followed here!

Then he reproaches him for the foolishness of his proposal. How it could be thought of, in the middle of battle, to have the ships pulled into the sea, since the Greeks would immediately lose courage and be destroyed by the Trojans.

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Subduedly, Agamemnon admits that Odysseus' rebuke has hit him hard. His intention, after all, had not been to bring the ships into the sea against the will of the Greeks. Someone, young or old, should now say what is to be done. Any reasonable thought would be welcome to him.

One need not look far for such a man, cries Diomedes. Here he stands. His advice should be followed; let his origin replace what he lacks in age to be allowed to speak thus. And after he has given a short history of his family, he proposes to arm themselves and go into the battle. Even if their wounds forbade them from participating themselves, they would fulfill with courage through persuasion those who, exhausted, leave off from the fight.

Diomedes' youthful wisdom also consists here in the principles: Everyone at his post! Fulfill the nearest duty with all your strength! One cannot fight: well, then at least be present! When Diomedes talks here now with a certain breadth about his ancestors, he repeats nothing, however, that

he might have already said in the sixth book at the meeting with Glaukos. From which house Diomedes descended was certainly allowed to be known to those taking part in the consultation, but at times one feels compelled to repeat even what is known. It belongs to Homer's peculiarities to permit his heroes such elaborations concerning the family. Much more circumstantially in the sixth book had Glaukos presented his own family history. I point out that these extended speeches are of a different nature than some of the broad but empty conversations of Idomeneus in the thirteenth book. What is now developing before us in the fourteenth contains progress of the action in every word, even in those of Diomedes when he speaks of his family, since Homer makes it his task in the Iliad to bring in the prehistory of the most noble heroes in occasional remarks. Diomedes' advice is accepted, and the three wounded men along with Nestor set out, Agamemnon in the lead.

They are joined by Poseidon, in the form of an older warrior, who grasps the king's hand, reassures him about the disposition of the Greeks toward him, and restores the courage of the army through a terrible roar that he breaks into, as if nine thousand men cried out at once.

The report of these things has taken up about a hundred and fifty verses. With a leap, the poet now transports us to Olympus and from there to Ida: one of those heavenly intermezzos takes place in which the gods again unfold the lightheartedness of their existence before our eyes. All distress that befalls humans, all responsibility that burdens the gods, has an end. Comedy-like, lighthearted deception takes the place of well-considered, serious action. Hera wants, in order to draw Zeus's gaze permanently away from the Greeks, to beguile him with beauty and pleasure. How she adorns herself, how with a lie she borrows from Aphrodite the girdle in which the goddess's victorious charms lie, how she brings the god of Sleep to assist her: all this, told in a friendly fairy-tale tone, lets us forget Greeks and Trojans; we see only the gods as the masters of the world playing catch-ball with the fates of humanity. The divine novella following now has perhaps even more than Apuleius' Cupid and Psyche inspired Raphael to the representations in the Farnesina. More insistently than the reappearing

marble images of the gods, Homer's fables filled him—as they had the entire poetic antiquity thousands of years before him—with the visions of infinite enjoyment of life that were not to be surpassed. How strange that the Greek imagination, together with the gift of letting beauty become visible, received in its first beginnings from an unknown source the models which to surpass never occurred even to itself in later prime periods, and which Raphael and Rubens and finally Cornelius brought into new forms. Homer is the beginning of all imaginative creation. A poet, not a visual artist. So we began with Waltharius and the Nibelungen, the Italians with Dante, the Spaniards with the Celestina.

Amazed, we admire anew in the fourteenth book the intercourse of the gods with one another, their statehood spanning heaven and earth, their power, their strength, their beauty, the respect prevailing in their speeches and addresses and at the same time the insolent wildness into which it turns. Everything shaped differently than among mortals. In the fourteenth book, it is no longer a matter of mere scenes that only interrupt earthly fates, but of a drama played out and carried through for itself, which captures our interest: the carrying through of an enchanting scene of deception, a farce playing out in the forms of colossal beauty: the story of an amorous husband who, lulled to sleep with guileful caresses, finally waking up, first wants to act as an impotent blusterer, but then calms down. And this joke carried through with the magnificent dignity that is nowhere lost to the masters of the universe. Thus, Francis I, Henry IV, and Louis XV let themselves be mastered by their mistresses. How deeply, however, do these kings and their courts stand below Homer's Olympians! How finished. Everything that Homer presents to us from the world of the gods is painted with spring colors on a golden ground that spreads out as large as the ocean irradiated by the sun. I use this comparison going into the immeasurable because only thus can the mixture of the physically dainty with the spatially and spiritually colossal be designated, which is peculiar to Homer's paintings from the world of the gods and which no imitation of later poetry repeats. How weak are Virgil's and Horace's gods in comparison!

Let us note that Hera's and Zeus's characters, as they appear this time in the fourteenth book, by no means repeat the views of their earlier appearance. Both have become milder. The way in which Zeus predicts the further course of the fates of Achilles and Hektor carries almost a slight accent of regret that, with all the good will inherent in him to satisfy every individual, he must nonetheless give in to fate. Hera appears this time younger and more amiable.

Poseidon's intercourse with Zeus lets one recognize again the consideration that both brothers, each a sovereign in his own field, take for one another. I point to these points only to state at this place in the poem a further progress toward the human among the gods, which at the conclusion of the *Iliad* will emerge even more purely in special beauty.

Let the content of the Olympic episode now be reported.

Not only Poseidon had noticed that Zeus, lingering on Ida, had turned his gaze and thoughts toward the far-dwelling, just peoples—the "mare-milkers," as some translate. Hera, too, remaining on Olympus with the other gods, kept her eyes open. When she sees Poseidon helpfully assisting the Greeks, she resolves to support him.

Hephaestus has built for her chambers that no other god may enter. Locking herself in there, she washes with ambrosia until not a blemish remains on her, and anoints herself with oils whose fragrance, perfuming the brazen palace, fills heaven and earth. Can the lovely breath exhaled by the earth at the approach of spring—as if violets were already blooming that are yet far off—be described more gracefully? Now Hera combs her hair, braiding with her hands the locks that flow down from her immortal head, and dons the robe that Athena wove for her with wonderful, manifold patterns. Over her breast, she fastens it with golden pins and puts on the girdle, and into her pierced earlobes she places pendants, each with three gleaming stars. Then she throws over herself the snow-white veil, radiant as the sun itself, and binds the beautiful sandals under her feet. When all this has been done to her body, she steps out of her chamber and beckons Aphrodite away from the other gods.

“Dear child,” she says, “do me a favor, even if it costs you an effort, for I am inclined toward the Greeks and you toward the Trojans.”

“Venerable Hera!” replies Aphrodite, daughter of great Cronion! “Gladly I do what is possible to do.”

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With guileful intent, Hera answers: “Then grant me the love and the sweet desire with which you make the immortal gods and mortal men subject to you, for I wish to go to the end of the world, where Oceanus, the forefather of the gods, and the primal mother Tethys dwell, to their palace, into which I was once brought by Rhea when Zeus cast Cronus down into the abysses of the earth and the sea. There they received me as a child and well cared for and nourished me. I wish to see them, for they have quarreled, a long time already, and rest apart from one another, and I wish to persuade them to lie together kindly again; then I shall be held in high honor by them.”

And the “friend of smiles,” Aphrodite:
“It would not be fitting not to comply with her
Who rests at night in the arms of mighty Zeus.”
And from her breast she loosens the gaily embroidered
Girdle, into which the enchanting charms
Are all woven: sweet understanding,
Also longing was in it and the soft whisper
That steals the reason even from the sensible-minded.
This she now gave into her hands and said:
“There, now wind the bright girdle about your bosom,
In which all this is woven and wrought,
And you will not, when you return, have undertaken
In vain what lies in your mind.”
And the mighty Hera smiled then,
And then, smiling, she laid it about her bosom.
And Aphrodite went to the house of Zeus,
But Hera from the summit of Olympus,
Over the snow-covered highest peaks

Of the Thracian mountains, which her foot did not touch,
Hurried along and descended by wave-washed
Lemnos to the sea, to the city of Thoas.
And there she met Sleep, the brother of Death,
And she took his hand and said: “Sleep,
You who tame all gods and men,
Formerly you listened to my word at times,
Do so now too, and I will thank you for it eternally:
Bring the radiant eyes of Zeus to rest,
Right now, when I lie in his arms,

And I will give you a beautiful golden
Throne, which Hephaestus shall make for me for you,
And a footstool, to see your softly walking
Feet upon it during the banquet.”
And the gently powerful Sleep said:
“Most venerable Hera! Sublime daughter
Of the son of Cronus! Every other
Of the ever-living gods I will
Gladly lull to sleep, and even Oceanus’ streaming
Flood, the origin of all created things,
But the son of Cronus I do not dare
To approach and lull to sleep.
For already once I gave in to you,
When the arrogant son of Zeus
Came by ship from Ilios, the city
Which he then destroyed, and I let
Zeus sink into deep slumber upon his couch,
And you stirred up the sea into a wild storm
And drove Hercules’ ship far away,
Distant from the others; but when Zeus awoke,
He raged, and he hunted the gods angrily
Through the palace, and me especially he would have
Hurled down through the ether into the sea,

Never to be seen again, had not Night,
Who overcomes all gods and men,
Taken me into her sheltering womb.
To her I came as a fugitive and sought protection.
And Zeus became calm; he did not wish to do
Anything to Night that would run against her mind.
And now is it to start all over again?"
But high Hera said to this:
"Sleep, why do you burden your thoughts
With the past? That was then: do you believe
Zeus will be wroth for the sake of these Trojans
As he was wroth for the sake of Hercules?
Come, I promise you one of the Graces
For a wife; she shall be your own
And belong to you forever!" When she said that,
Sleep cried out in bright delight: "Good!
Will you swear to me by the water of the Styx?
Touch the earth with one hand,
Touch the gleaming sea with the other!
May all the gods of the underworld,
Who rule around Cronus in the depths of the earth,

Be witnesses that you give me Pasithea
From the Graces as a wife, for whom
I have long since yearned!" But Hera
Swore as he wished, calling upon all the gods
Dwelling in Tartarus, whom they call Titans,
Individually by name. And both strode,
Clothing themselves in mist, lightly along,
Until they reached Ida. Where waves and billows
Wash its foot, they came to a halt,
Stepped onto firm ground and ascended,
And the outermost treetops of the trees brushed
Their soles as they hurried upward.

There Sleep remained, to look Zeus in the eye,
Upon the highest peak of the tallest fir
That reached through the clouds out into the ether;
He sat, covered by the young green branches:
He looked like the sweet-voiced piping bird
That the gods call Chalcis in the mountains,
But men call Cymindis.
Hera, however, climbed the height of Ida,
And the lord of the clouds beheld her,
And sweet desire filled his heart;
Just as it was then, when they first
Wedded one another without their parents' knowledge.
And standing before her, he addressed her:
"How do you come over here to me from Olympus
Without team and chariot and so hastily?"
And with deceptive words Hera said:
"Far off I wish to go to Oceanus and to Tethys,
Who once raised me in their house;
There I wish to go, to see if I might reconcile them,
For they have long avoided one another.
But my team remained below at the foot of the mountain;
For your sake I have climbed up here,
Lest you should take it ill of me afterwards
If I went away without your permission."
And Zeus said to her: "To travel thither
There is no hurry! Stay! That we both,
Rejoicing in one another, may rest together,
For no mortal woman and no goddess
Has conquered my heart as you do today.
Neither Ixion's wife, when I loved her,
Who bore me the wise Peirithous;
Nor when I loved Danae, Acrisius'

Daughter, with the fine-ankled feet,

Who bore me the bravest Perseus;
Nor when I loved the famous King Phoenix's
Daughter, who bore me Minos and Rhadamanthys;
Nor when I loved Semele!"

With comfortable narrative, Zeus lists from the treasury of his memories which women he had loved alongside Hera, and which excellent sons they gave him: yet none of them all ever filled him with such desire as Hera does now—indeed, she herself never so much as today. And so Homer continues to tell how Hera completely beguiles Zeus, how fresh flowers, crocus and hyacinth, sprout from the ground, thick and soft, to form their bed; how Zeus, enveloped in clouds with Hera, sinks into motionless sleep; and how the god of Sleep, after thus completing his work, hastens as a messenger to Poseidon. To report such things with innocent truth is given only to the great poets. It is the same language in which the beginnings of *Wilhelm Meister* were written, where words bloom like field flowers into which the sun shines. Yet no more beautiful tale than this primordial myth "How Zeus was Deceived by Hera" has been told in the following millennia. Like a series of innocent Mozartian melodies, Homer's sentences range themselves one after another. And one has the feeling that, in attempting a translation, this Greek, which resonated thus three thousand years ago, cannot be matched by any language in the world—not even German, which nonetheless stands closest to it. How might the music have sounded with which this was recited by the singers on the feast days of the Greek people?

This time, too, I have not translated, but only set down clearly what lingered of Homer's verses in my thoughts. Every word for which a full German word did not correspond was passed over.

Voss, it seems to me, did not hit the right tone here; since such things could not be translated without an artistic coloring, he sought the right mood but did not find it.

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Homer—it is, to be sure, only a conjecture—applied the language of the people here, but refined it imperceptibly, as Dante and Boccaccio did, so that we would not be able to judge the process of purification to which he

subjected the coarser linguistic means. We are not justified in saying that Homer simply wrote down what the people perhaps sang in songs.

Voss's translation is unsurpassed wherever the *Iliad* offers passages whose content allows scope for the uniquely epic tone of the Low German linguistic style; at times, however, they do not offer it, and then his language, through no fault of his own, receives something affected, something literarily manufactured. No more could the best Dutch painter of the North Germanic coastal lands bring the clarity of the southern sky and the Mediterranean Sea into colors as Claude Lorrain did. Voss imitated too many loud-sounding words from the Greek words, applied too many sensuously broad adjectives that had grown, however, in his study. Voss's need for mechanical fidelity stood too much in his way here, to which he felt obligated as a linguistic scholar.

Monti, to whom the Italian language offered entirely different means than Voss's did to him, has just as little done justice to the demands that this Homeric fairy tale makes on the translator. He would have had to write in Florentine like Boccaccio to hit the right tones here, but would thereby also have only delivered a feat of erudition. Monti writes modernly, elegantly, in a language that too little lets one forget the polished-gleaming art of Canova, derived from later Alexandrian Greek art, under whose influence Monti and his contemporaries stood. Note how little Raphael's divine scenes in the Farnesina have of this Canovan smoothed character; no, they have nothing of it. Raphael's figures, with which he staged the Cupid and Psyche myth, are the natural refinement of the highest ruling classes of his time. In this, he perhaps met with Homer.

Voss did not have visions of this kind at his disposal. He remained within the circle of sociability presented perhaps by Chodowiecki's copperplates, or what Oeser provided in divine figures. He had perhaps seen only a few meager samples of ancient or Renaissance art occasionally when he translated the *Iliad*; the highest ideal of his imagination was the loving pastor's daughter. Under these circumstances, he achieved great things, but

for us that is no longer sufficient. We must well consider Voss's course of education when we judge his translations of ancient poetry.

The progress of the fourteenth book shows Homer at a new stage of exploiting his principle of letting events become visible from different sides and alternating in this localization. He interrupts the novella of how Zeus was deceived by Hera—I say novella with a view to Boccaccio—with the narration from the side of the Greeks: how Poseidon, while Zeus slumbers, begins to work for the Greeks with full energy, and how the duel breaks out between Aias and Hektor, as a result of which Hektor, thundered down by a terrible stone-throw from his opponent, is carried out of the encounter while the Trojans turn to flight. This again is represented from the side of the Trojans. Only in the last verses of the book does a return occur to the representation of the further struggle from the side of the Greeks. This seemingly aimless and contentless appendix to the book was necessary to keep us in the feeling that the Greeks are now of primary importance in these battles; this conclusion, containing a glorification of Aias, was an aesthetic demand, for Aias had to be the main character here despite Hektor. After the humiliating role that Homer let him play as possessed by fear, he had to rise again in the immense strength and courage that was according to his nature. I point to these contrasts, which emerge only when we keep in view what earlier books contain, or—with a look ahead—what later ones contain: opposites that would disappear entirely if we did not grasp the entire poem as a pre-conceived totality.

The defeat of Hektor—how his companions lay him down on the way to the city on the bank of the Scamander and he comes to himself there for a few moments, then black blood breaks out and he sinks back unconscious—places us full of sympathy at his side. Let us also note that Sarpedon plays a role in this casting out of the Trojans from the area of the wall, but one that hardly brings him into the foreground, since his death is not to occur here but only later. The further we advance, the more we subsequently feel that the thirteenth book in its composition bears the mark of an inorganic insertion whose content is not drawn upon later.

Let it also be pointed out that Hera had been right over against the god of Sleep: Zeus would not fall into such violent anger for the sake of the Trojans as he once did for the sake of Hercules. The way in which Zeus, after his first outburst, arrives at the consideration that Hera nonetheless always remains his wife and that Poseidon is his brother, and that over against the Titans imprisoned in Tartarus he nonetheless always remains dependent on the help of his own family, lets the thought spring up again as if Homer's divine economy had sprung from the view of high family relations existing in his time, to which—in order to be allowed to mention them—the form of ancient myths was lent. We shall observe an escalation, even as far as the burlesque part of this inner intercourse of the immortals with one another is concerned, occurring in the same measure as the seriousness of the earthly battles increases.

The part of the fourteenth book where the victorious battle of the Greeks, which broke out during Zeus's slumber, is described, is distinguished by comparisons of a new version. The "lion" and the "boar" are abandoned; the images taken from the life of nature, on the other hand, do not have an inner turn of their own as before, but join the narration in new, spirited rhetoric.

Hektor placed the Trojans in ranks,
Who like taut bows yearned for the fight:
Hektor there and Poseidon here! — the sea beat
Wildly against the ships of the Achaeans
And against the tents, rearing up over the shore,
And the armies struck against one another
Now with a great halloo! Not so mightily resounds
The wave of the sea, which the north wind
Drives against the firm ground of the land,
Not the burning fire, which the storm
Whips through the wooded valley in the mountains,
Not the wind that tosses the sighing branches
Of mighty tall oaks hither and thither,
As the battle-cry of the Trojan and the Achaean

When they rose up against one another.

What power in the images, which mingle so that a magnificent landscape opens before us, glaringly illuminated, as at night during a thunderstorm everything suddenly shows itself and suddenly disappears again. On the left the sea, then the shore toward which the waves break, and on the right the mountains in which the wild fire seeks its paths. A work of art in itself!

This is one example. The other is the fall of Hektor when, retreating before Aias and on the point of losing himself in the throng of friends, he is nonetheless reached by the stone that Aias hurled at him. This time I let Voss's broader dactyls step in here.

But the retreating one was struck by Telamonian Aias
Quickly with the stone; for many, to support the roomy ships,
Lay rolled before the feet of the combatants: lifting that one now,
He threw it over the shield at his breast, near the neck;
That throw swung him like a top, and he staggered all around;
As before the crashing blow of Zeus the uprooted oak
Crashes down, and terrible the vapor of burning sulfur
Steams from the trunk; discouraged and stunned stands he who beholds it,
Near the place, for heavy hits the thunder of almighty Zeus:
So fell into the dust the power of divine Hektor.
Quickly the lance slipped from his hand, the shield followed,
Also the helmet; around him clattered the bronze of his gleaming armor.

Note the immense power of the image and how, like the previous one, it is inserted into the diction for itself without an inner turn.

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Homer has become ever more vivid and simple in the progress of his poetry, just as the poets of the *Nibelungen* and of *Faust* followed their path with ever greater certainty. For it is natural that the closer the decision approaches, the more visibly that which accelerates this approach steps into the foreground.

Note.

One must compare Bürger's and Stolberg's attempts with Voss's work to measure the enthusiasm he aroused. What Voss, Bürger, and Stolberg achieved, however, are attempts by poets, not by mere scholars. Everything later, with Wolf's toneless translation fragment at the head, are lifeless undertakings that could have no success, because these later ones did not have at their disposal the almost untouched linguistic material with which those others managed. [1]

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[1] *Goethe-Vorlesungen*. Seventh edition (Cotta, Stuttgart and Berlin, 1903) II, 146 ff.

Voss had grown up in the use of that Low German, spoken peasant and sailor language whose delicate roughness was raised by him above the dialect, as Dante raised his language above the Florentine dialect: Dante's poems and those of Voss are both artificial products, just as the language of Homer may once have been an artificial one in its time. To create this epic language, which rendered Homer's images and thoughts, was Voss's secret, which could be of no use to him in his translations of Latin poets, but which he developed into the purest sound in his *Luise* and the smaller narrative poems. From this the South German Goethe then learned to write *Hermann and Dorothea*, *Alexis and Dora*, and the *Achilleis* and the *Roman Elegies*; and from Goethe and Schiller, Schlegel and Platen learned to build hexameters—verses that, imitating the silvery sound of Goethe, occasionally let it ring as a glassy one, but are beautiful and full of melody. Among later epics in this tone, Hebel's and Mörike's poems are to be mentioned in the first place.

It is now not difficult today to trace these provincial efforts to their origin and to criticize them as artificial mannerisms. Yet all modern literature is of provincial origin. It stands there as a part of our being, and we honor its originators. We do not know the foreign influences under which Homer's poetry stood, nor do we know how the Ionic sounded that people spoke on the street. If today we only wish to accept as good German the clarified language originating from Goethe and Schiller, which our newest poets seek to nationalize further with a certain realistic touch by

artificially adding back to it the coloring of dialects or also the perfume of the German linguistic style of past centuries, then let that be valid; for progressing peoples demand new expression for new thoughts, and if a poet whose homeland was South Germany attempted to translate Homer anew, he would certainly poetize differently today than Voss, or perhaps abandon the imitation of ancient verse series entirely. For what sounded fresh and natural a hundred years ago, even if a poet wrote it, may today have lost a part of its linguistic power.

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Things stand differently again when someone today attempts to translate ancient measures into modern German in such a way that a certain colorless harmony produces the appearance of flawlessness. No work of art can come into being this way. Plaster casts of ancient works will never receive the rank of works hewn from the living rock. Our modern German places such a superabundance of models worthy of imitation at our disposal that the production of impeccable school exercises becomes possible. From any highly developed language possessing a literature spanning centuries, a fine ear and a skilled pen, combined with memory, will find a treasure of turns and phrases by means of which deceptive products can be manufactured. But such poems cannot have an inner life of their own, whether the fabricator applies his own innate language or a learned one originally foreign to him in such experiments. A skillful, sensitive, learned musician could well compose an aria that would be taken for a piece by Mozart. A skillful and experienced Germanist would perhaps be capable of translating Goethe's "Wie kommt's, daß du so traurig bist" or "The King of Thule" or "Over all the peaks" so fluently into the language of Ulfilas as well as into that of Wolfram or Walther that other, less skilled scholars would look up to this achievement with veneration. What Ulfila, Wolfram, or Walther would have judged, however, if these things had been presented to them, we cannot, of course, know. The ability to apply such arts has nothing to do with that of delivering good translations. Whoever wishes to translate must feel the urge to repeat a work of a foreign language—whose inner value and linguistic beauty drive him to the attempt—in the language of his own time and his own people in such a way that everyone may partake of the

elevating joy afforded him by the enjoyment of the original. How to proceed in this can only be known by him who begins the task. Whether his undertaking has succeeded, success will show. Many have undertaken such transformations without succeeding in them. Others have been fortunate in it. Works like Schlegel's Shakespeare (one should finally separate Tieck's name from Schlegel's) show that heroic deeds are possible even for translators. Goethe's *Benvenuto Cellini*, Jacob Grimm's paraphrase of the *Waltharius*, Simrock's *Nibelungen*, Talvj's *Serbian Songs* join the ranks. Our latest translations are often distinguished too much by the playful ease with which the purely linguistic has been overcome.

Fifteenth Book

It has already been said what the first scene of the fifteenth book contains: Zeus' awakening, the sight of the fleeing Trojans, Hektor's unconsciousness, Poseidon at the head of the Greeks. The first feeling of the father of men and immortals is pity for Hektor, who, laid down by his own on the bank of the Scamander, spits blood; the second, a flare-up of anger against Hera, whose game Zeus now sees through.

"Your deception," he addresses Hera, "has led Hektor away from the battle and set the Trojans in terror. Now I do not know whether you should not be the first to taste the fruits of your baseness and I give you a sound thrashing. Do you remember how you hung up there? From your feet I let two anvils dangle, and around your hands I placed a golden, unbreakable fetter! But you hung there in the ether and the clouds, and the gods on great Olympus could not loosen you. For whomever I could have caught, him I would have seized and hurled down from the threshold of my house until he reached the earth below with his last strength. But even that did not still the pain in me for the divine Heracles, whom you, with Boreas' help, drove into the stormy sea as far as Kos. From there I then led him to Argos. Remember that, and leave off the deceptions, and do not believe that it will bring you profit to beguile me here with love."

Fear overcomes Hera. But to the mistress of Olympus and the other inhabitants of the sacred heights, every means is right to achieve her purposes. She lies. She slanders. She deceives. She cajoles. Zeus knows all her tricks, but he must get along with her. Hera now denies all guilt to him. By the inhabitants of the underworld, by Zeus' sacred head, and by her marriage bed, she swears it was not she who instigated Poseidon. On that, she could indeed take an oath—without, of course, mentioning the rest. She offers to bring Poseidon to leave the battle and go wherever Zeus commands.

This trait, through which Hera immediately improves her position, Molière could not have invented more happily. What Zeus and Hera now settle between themselves—how he, smiling soothingly, grants her belief and commissions her not only to persuade Poseidon away but also to send Apollo to Hektor, whom he is to assist—belongs entirely to higher comedy. At the conclusion of his benevolent speech, Zeus then proceeds to revelations of his further intentions by foretelling the impending course of things. Ilios, he admits, is to be destroyed. Before he grants victory to the Greeks, however, what he promised to Achilles' mother must be fulfilled, and none of the gods should take it into their heads to be helpful to the Greeks before this time. Things had not been formulated by Homer so clearly and in full connection before. We now know exactly what is to be expected in the final books.

Hera leaves Zeus to carry out his orders. What follows now far surpasses what was contained in the beginnings of this Olympic intermediate scene.

> And from Ida she hurried to Olympus.
> As a traveler who has seen the world
> Hurries hither and thither with the memory
> Of all the places where he has been,
> So with the speed of thought flew the goddess [1]
> And in the palace of Zeus she found the gods:
> All of them sprang up at her sight
> To greet her with raised goblets.

But Hera, overlooking them all,
Accepted the goblet of Themis alone,
Who was the first to come toward her,
And Themis asked her: “How distraught

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[1] Here, for the first time, the comparison of physical speed with that of thought.

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do you come? Has your husband, the son of Cronus,
Sent you home ill?” And Hera said:
“Rather do not ask me, you know him well,
How he is hard and reckless and immoderate;
Only let the meal begin: you will hear
What evil things he has in mind for us.
It will prepare no joy for any of you,
Neither for mortal men nor for the gods,
Even if many a one may still be cheerful at table today.”

In my rendering of Hera’s words, I choose the most common turns of daily intercourse, because Homer intends to let the gods converse in the language of the great crowd.

And the sublime Hera sat down.
Sadly the gods sat in the palace;
Hera laughed, to be sure, with her lips,
But her brow remained dark above her eyes;
Reproachful and angry she began: “Foolish
Are we with our resentment against Zeus;
Neither violence nor speeches disturb his doing.
He sits there, nothing we begin disturbs him;
He is the stronger, let everyone think on that
If he himself should inflict evil upon us.
For to Ares surely it would be a pain
If his dear Ascalaphus falls in battle,
Of whom he indeed claims that he is his son.”

How could the ill humor of a woman annoyed to the utmost, who is nonetheless forced to keep herself calm, be better described? And at the same time, the intention to provoke Ares in order to prepare for him a similar fate as she herself had experienced.

For Ares starts up furiously and declares they should not take it ill of him if he hurries on the spot to the Greek ships to avenge his son. Already he has had the chariot brought out, his two steeds “Fear and Terror” harnessed, and has put on his armor, when Athena—with words that were perhaps common insults in Homer’s time—takes the armor off him again and wrests the lance from his hand.

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“Are you mad? You are going to your destruction!
Have you no ears to hear? Are you not ashamed
To lose your head so? Are you deaf?
Do you not hear what Hera just tells,
Who comes from Zeus? Do you too, after you
Have heaped burdens of disaster upon yourself,
Wish to return home to Olympus and let us all
Experience misfortune? On the spot
He will turn from the Greeks and the Trojans
To Olympus and strike the innocent
With the guilty one after another.
Your son is dead, so let that be.
Better and stronger men have fallen
Or will fall one day. It would be too great a trouble
To preserve the fathers and sons of all
Great mortal humanity from misfortune!”
And she led him back to his seat,
But Hera beckoned out of the palace
Iris and Apollo and said to them:
“Zeus demands that you appear immediately
Before his face on Ida to carry out
What he deems good to command you.”

It seems to me that Voss's translation has kept this narration and the speeches of the goddesses in too sublime a tone. Even earlier, Homer let Hera and Athena speak thus; what we hear here finds its highest escalation in the twentieth book, where the goddesses beat each other while trading insults.

Iris and Apollo now receive their instructions from Zeus; the former to bring Poseidon out of the battle, the latter to assist Hektor. The scene between Iris and Poseidon is the last of this divine comedy in this book; after it, we are transposed back into the seriousness of earthly existence.

Zeus's message to Poseidon is sharp, but kept within the limits of a certain consideration for his brother's high rank. Iris renders it literally as duty requires. Poseidon flares up and proves to Iris why Zeus has no right to issue commands to him. At the great division, he received the sea, Hades the underworld, Zeus the ether: the earth and Olympus belong to all three with equal rights.

Zeus was indeed the eldest of them, but he would not submit. Zeus should rather drive his sons and daughters so excessively. They would listen to him if he applied compulsion.

Iris's answer shows how much Homer still conceived even this scene in the sense of comedy. "Your strong and unfriendly words," she says, "I will convey to Zeus. Or"—she adds hesitantly—"will you not change something in them after all? The spirit of the noble is inclined toward yielding. You know indeed that the Erinyes stand by the side of the elder."

Poseidon grants her right. She had spoken sensibly, and it was also noble that someone who brings a message knows the demands of right and equity. He would give in. Should Zeus, however, eventually wish to spare Ilios after all, an unquenchable anger would flare up in him.

> Therewith the earth-shaker left the Greeks,
> Diving into the sea, and they felt what they had lost.

Homer had earlier sought to bestow individuality upon the somewhat ethereal Iris; this time he completes his gift. Iris, in this combination of painstaking fulfillment of service with the permitted assertion of her own benevolent persuasion, is the ideal image of an executive secretary of high rank. [1]

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[1] Voss, in translating the last verses in Poseidon's first rebuffing speech, makes an innocent attempt to let his personal criticism of the way things go in Zeus's family flow in. Accurately translated, the conclusion reads: "For it would be better that he should scold the daughters and the sons who are his children with excessive words: they will obey him when he drives them, even if by compulsion." To which it should be noted that for "scolding," Homer here uses a word of, it seems, harsh meaning. Voss now translates:

His daughters perhaps and sons too might he with decency

Threaten through haughty words, whom he himself begot;

For they will obey him upon every command out of compulsion!

In these somewhat pedantic-sounding sentences, "decency" is used by Voss such that it is meant to be a rendering of *βέλτερον*: it would have been decent toward him—toward Poseidon, namely—if Zeus did not use toward him a manner of speaking that only his sons and daughters would have to put up with. At the same time, however, Voss introduces the "with decency" such that therein lies a more general admonition for Zeus to employ decent language within his family. It almost seems as if Voss wanted to put his own opinion into Poseidon's mouth: that no fitting tone prevails in Zeus's family and Zeus would do well to let a remedy take place.

Zeus looks with pleasure as Poseidon disappears into the sea. His threats, he believes, were the sole cause of his brother's change of mind. We have already seen above how important it was to Homer to represent fraternal relations. Until then, however, he had only depicted younger pairs of brothers; here we encounter two men who, without being old men, represent the type of a higher age limit. Consideration that stems from experience and

inner calm are the signs of their nature. Poseidon's nature is to appease and let himself be appeased. Winckelmann's beautiful comparison of the sea has become common property of literature—of the sea which, stirred up by storms however violent, in its depths always preserves the same stillness. Let us note the statesman-like restraint in Poseidon's nature: only Ilios should not escape the Greeks; everything else he is willing to abandon.

Now Zeus sends the summoned Apollo down to Hektor, and soon the Greeks notice that the hard-hit hero has risen again and returns to the battle. A significant wonder in their eyes, which would not have been possible without Zeus's intervention. Only Aias, Teucer, Idomeneus, and other heroes hold their ground; the great mass of the Greeks flee, behind their backs, toward the ships.

What I dismiss here with few words, Homer brings in a slowly advancing narration. Step by step, he lets Hektor press back the enemies. Although we have just heard Zeus's decision to abandon Ilios to the Greeks, we breathed again in sympathy for the city when Hektor received new life under Apollo's encouragement, and in the same measure, again, as the Trojans are now victorious, sympathy immediately seizes us for the Greeks, whose cause seems lost.

This play of the poet with our innermost feelings is one of the most beautiful proofs of his power. Inexhaustible is his imagination in images to make clear what happens. While Poseidon has just been wrested from the leadership of the Greeks with threats, Apollo now takes that of the Trojans into his hand. It is he who clears the way through the ditch to the camp for the pressing throngs of Hektor. But now Zeus himself openly steps onto the side of the Trojans. After Homer has once more circumstantially explained how all the heroic deeds which Hektor now performs are unable to preserve him from the destruction that inescapably awaits him in a few days through Achilles, he now wants to let him fully taste for the last time the luck of being victorious. The description of the advance of the Trojans and the desperate retreat of the Greeks is of a different kind here than in the earlier books. Homer now describes the battle from the side of both peoples

simultaneously; where he needs comparisons, he treats them more rarely individually as images as before, but mixes them more intimately into the diction. The appearance of a ship struggling with the waves is woven in, as it were, in broken momentary images again and again, while other comparisons simultaneously intervene, which in turn are broken like the former. Lions, flames, and sea-waves plunge together. The appearance, previously always maintained, as if the battle consisted only of a wealth of simultaneously occurring individual combats, so that a certain bas-relief-like drawing of the scenes keeps the individual figures apart, is entirely lost. This time we have a painting in the sense of Raphael's Battle of Constantine before us, a mingling of masses, like the storming of immense cloud-trains driving the different winds against one another in the sky.

Opposite Hektor, only Aias still maintains the cause of the Greeks before our eyes. Not as a performer of protruding heroic deeds for himself alone, but, like Hektor, as the quintessence of Greek resistance.

The Greeks have long since ceased to be the attackers, but they do not flee either; what is dear to man in ideal and real goods, they defend in the consciousness of their desperate situation, and Aias is the center of the stand. To whomever the second part of the fifteenth book is present in its details, he must feel that what I say here in general sentences is only the headings of a flow of events streaming forth in astonishing richness, of which we would not wish to miss a word. But to remind us how exactly Homer always knows what he wants, let a small episode be pointed out that seems to be dispensable for the whole, but is not.

Aias, then, dominates the situation among the Greeks. Beside him, but more in the sense of one who endeavors to maintain the national cause with admonition and prayer, is Nestor. The other heroes, we know, are incapable of combat or perform nothing of significance. But what then does Menelaus do? Where is he, for whose wife and whose stolen treasures the great slaughter occurs? Homer does not fail occasionally to direct a sharp beam of light onto Helena's husband. Among the fighting pairs, among others, Dolops is named on the Trojan side, and Meges, the son of Phyleus, on the

Greek side. Already both have inflicted so much harm on each other that destruction is imminent for one, when Menelaus comes to the aid of his countryman. Secretly, coming from behind, he pierces Dolops' shoulder, so that the lance-point breaks out at the front of the chest and the stricken man sinks onto his face in the dust. Each of these combats ends with the victor stripping the armor from the defeated, and Menelaus now asserts a claim over against Meges to that of Dolops! It is not said with what success. Immediately afterwards, Homer lets Menelaus appear again: it has come so far that the Greeks, pressed close to the ships, surround them like an iron fence, man to man, exhorted by Aias to the utmost resistance. Menelaus also stands there and incites Antilochus, the youngest son of Nestor, who is always to be found in his vicinity, to spring forward and slay one of the Trojans.

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It is not said why Menelaus did not wish to undergo the adventure himself, but "merely speaking thus, he himself made off, but that one he incited." How Antilochus then indeed let himself be incited and fights with Melanippus does not belong here. I only draw attention to the strange brevity of the verse just cited and to Menelaus' questionable role in both cases. Of him there is then no talk again for a long time. At the conclusion of the book, Hektor's terrible cry "Bring fire!" resounds, while Aias from the height strikes down every one of the Trojans who ventures near with fire in hand.

But what has become of Achilles and Patroclus while these deeds take place?

The strange lingering of Patroclus in the tent of Eurypylus, whose wound he binds, has already been pointed out. That Patroclus let himself be detained as a respectful listener to Nestor's long-winded narrations lies in his character: respect is one of the elements moving him most powerfully. But that he then, no matter who else might come his way, did not storm back to Achilles was incomprehensible. Equally strange is the way in which Homer then finally lets him come to remember his errand: in the middle of the reports of the combats just discussed, the poet inserts a few verses in

which it is told how Patroclus sits with Eurypylus in the tent, encourages him, and lays soothing juices on his wound, when the din of the battle—which was after all only concerned with the storming of the wall—reaches him and lets him break out into lamentation. He may now linger no longer, he cries out; he must to the son of Peleus, to see if he might not now through divine help move him to enter the battle. Therewith he hurries away.

The dry version of these verses, the bare words of Patroclus falling out of the situation, the artless insertion of the scene lead one to suspect that the parts of the *Iliad* in which Patroclus' return to Achilles was told at the right place and in the right words by Homer himself were perhaps not at the disposal of Pisistratus' people, so that they sought to fill the gap with a makeshift of their own making.

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Yet I do not insist on this suspicion. For in every work of art there sometimes occur passages which appear less fortunate, and we encounter in other books of the *Iliad* short parts interspersed in this way, as one might say. We see Homer endeavoring, precisely here at the end of the fifteenth book, the more radiantly he lets Hektor's bravery emerge, the more emphatically to point toward Achilles' imminent re-entry, to which Hektor falls victim; and Zeus himself must express that his favor now proven to the Trojans is only wrung from him through the promise given to Thetis to bring the Greeks to the utmost despair. In this sense, the inserted passage, quite in the spirit of the Homeric procedure, could have the purpose of reminding once more how soon things would change through Achilles' appearance.

One more thing should be noted. We have often seen how intimately Homer presents Hektor's figure in the *Iliad* from the beginning in a realistic sense more visibly before us than those of the other heroes. At the conclusion of the fifteenth book, this shows itself again. Certainly, the poet's intention is also to represent Aias in the magnificent constancy of his nature, but Aias has something plastic offering itself to all sides, Hektor something of a painting. Until the conclusion of the *Iliad*, this coloristic

treatment of Hektor, working with light and shadow, is maintained. So much so that, technically considered, Hektor would be the main person of the poem. This artistic treatment of a single figure asserting itself in many places in the *Iliad* would not be possible for the poet if the entire work had not sprung from the artistic understanding of a single man, constantly surveying all parts, who has reflected on the means at his disposal.

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On an unprinted sheet that Suphan communicates to me, the following remark by Goethe is found: “That the plastic art appears on such a high level in the *Iliad* might well yield an argument for the modernity of the poem.” Goethe’s remark refers perhaps only to the diverse works of Hephaestus described by Homer. To my feeling, Homer must have had before his eyes a developed sculpture and painting whose effective means he distinguished.

We take our leave of the fifteenth book with the feeling that Achilles’ re-entry into the combat is imminent. But this expectation is once again deceived.

Sixteenth Book

We know the practice of Homer (and of modern novelists): where something significant has broken in, the consequences of which are awaited with dread, to first allow a pause for the echoes to fade. We recall how Goethe, in this sense, inserts Ottilie’s diary in *Elective Affinities*: the reader is to become calm again before the new strokes of fate, of which he will be a witness, roll in.

Perhaps this most simply explains the function of those verses in the fifteenth book in which, after the first breakthrough of the Trojans into the Greek camp, the listener is to be given the opportunity to let this event take its effect. For a time, Patroclus appears before us, until the mighty confrontation of Hektor and Aias draws us back into the events. Once more, at the end of the fifteenth book, we encounter such a point: Hektor, ordering

fire to be thrown into the ships; Aias, standing atop the first ship, thrusting down with his spear everyone who ventures near with a torch; on Ida, Zeus, awaiting the first flare of a Greek ship to turn things around in an instant. That a pause filled with other views should occur here corresponds to Homer's manner.

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With these the sixteenth book begins, so dependent in its content upon the fifteenth that neither is conceivable without the other. I ask that Voss's translation be read here word for word. Aias and Hektor's counteraction at the close of the fifteenth book is one of the grandest pieces of world literature. These verses act like Doric temples whose rows of columns we wander through.

The sixteenth book transports us to Achilles' campsite.

> Thus they fought around the ship.
> But as down the rock the cloud-born
> Water flows, so with flowing tears
> Stood Patroclus beside Achilles again.
> And Achilles, looking at him, asked pityingly:
> "Why do you weep, Patroclus? Like a little girl
> Running after her mother in tears,
> Clinging to her dress and with her gaze
> Seeking hers, until she takes her in her arms;
> So too for you, Patroclus, do the eyes trickle:
> Have you something to say to the Myrmidons or me?
> Did news come to you from home
> Which you alone know? Does your father live,
> Or mine no more, whom we both,
> Were they dead, would mourn together?
> Or do you lament so for the sake of the Greeks,
> Who are now perishing by the ships?
> Speak, so that I too may learn what you know!"
> Deeply sighing, Patroclus then said:
> "Achilles, sublime hero of the Greeks,

Be not wroth with me: I weep for our Greeks,
As many as they were, brave men,
Lying dead by the ships or wounded!
No longer fights the mighty Diomedes,
No longer fought Odysseus and Agamemnon,
Nor Eurypylus, whose leg an arrow hit.
But the physicians seek to help them:
You alone help no one! May anger never
Seize me as that which you now cherish,
Hero of misfortune! Who in all the future
Will remember you joyfully, if you do not help
Your own today, when help perhaps comes too late!
Unmerciful one, who begot you?
Father and mother you never had!

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The dark sea and the unclimbable
Rock mountains begot you, so unfeeling are you!
But if you fear to offend the gods,
Or if your mother has confided to you
That a command from Zeus forbids you the fight,
Well then, send me forth with the Myrmidons,
To see if I may help the Greeks to radiant victory;
Lay your armor about my shoulders,
That in the delusion that it is you, the Trojans retreat,
And the Greeks catch their breath a little;
Easily, too, we who go fresh into the fight
Shall drive the Trojans away from the camp toward Ilios."

Achilles' speech becomes understandable only when we learn the progress of the conversation. It must be considered that the *Iliad* is not about a man coming to his senses who yielded too much to insulted ambition; rather, Achilles' suffering is to be grasped as a spiritual illness whose healing is possible only through terrible events. The sending out of Patroclus to gather information appears, viewed thus, only as a first slight sign of the beginning recovery. It had a double meaning: Achilles wishes to

receive a report on the Greeks' destruction, which is finally becoming a reality. Not their rescue, but their downfall he demands to hear, so that they, seeking help, may clasp his knees. In the depths of his soul, however, the national feeling had simultaneously awakened, which he believed he had smothered.

The most natural thing for him would have been to ask the last question first upon Patroclus' appearance. But as if he fears the answer, he takes on the pretense that he no longer remembers why he sent Patroclus out, talks himself into a mocking tone, and then—as if he himself disapproved of it—asks about the death of his father. Only at the last does he name the Greeks.

And now Patroclus, whom we have known until then as the compliant, taciturn man almost denying his own feelings: Achilles' manner, unbearable to his heart, brings to eruption the inner indignation he had hitherto kept locked within him. Moderately he begins, only to pass over into an accusation that would have to separate the two companions, did Achilles—who always has before his eyes that it is a matter of the approach of his own destruction—allow any echo of Patroclus' reproaches to become alive within him.

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Let us imagine Achilles' and Patroclus' words as arias that Handel surrounded with a melody: what a wonderful escalation of purely musical expression would be possible there, what a mixture of mourning, strength, and sublimity! Homer, when he recited this book for the first time, must have almost faltered in his voice, like Goethe, who, when reciting his verses, could not speak further because of bursting tears. I have contracted both speeches, which are much more wordy and more in the tone of conversation and which Voss also translated in full breadth, as the full tone of the Homeric stream of words seemed to me at this point inimitable, and my way of expressing only the indispensable seemed the appropriate means to render the impression better than the circumstantial Germanization of everything there.

What does Achilles reply to this outburst of the innermost feeling of the one who, of all mortals, alone still stands near him? Nothing but the eternal

repetition of the thoughts that haunt him day and night: the injustice Agamemnon did to him, the old story with an enumeration of the details. Let each of us tell ourselves how pedantic the quiet memory of suffered wrong is! Like children who are told fairy tales and raise an objection if something is omitted, so is he to whom injustice has happened when he skips over what was done to him. Patroclus may, if he wishes, hurry in his armor to the aid of the Greeks; for himself, however, one will wait in vain. He should move Agamemnon to return the stolen property and Briseis. And then an admonition: from the camp Patroclus may drive the Trojans, but not pursue them before the city, because one of the Olympians might let him pay for it. He should save the ships, but then return to him and let Trojans and Greeks go on murdering one another. And as a conclusion to these inhuman thoughts, a prayer to Zeus and Athena and Apollo:

> If only, O Zeus, O Athena, O Apollo!
> Not a single Trojan now saved himself
> And not a single Greek survived the day!
> That we two, alone remaining of all,
> Might both destroy Troy to its foundations!

We remember the prayer of the Trojan women that Diomedes might be annihilated.

One of the most magnificent curses of fanatical hatred against one's own people, such as we Germans, unfortunately, only too well understand. Let us also remember how Kriemhild took her revenge.

Once more one of the undecided moments now occurs, which requires a contrast and rest to be better felt, and so Homer leads us back to Aias, who, standing on his ship—almost alone now—carries the fate of the Greeks in his hands. Pelted from all sides with spears that, sticking in his shield, weigh down his shoulder, he stands there. The sweat of anxiety runs down him. He staggers and does not yield. Then comes the last: Hektor, pressing close to him, hacks through his lance, so that the empty stump without the bronze point remains in Aias' fist. Now he recognizes that the gods are in the game and retreats, and now fire is thrown into the ship! We know what

that means. But now back to Achilles! The upflaring flame suddenly brings him to his senses for a moment. Now he urges Patroclus to arm himself. And now it is described how Patroclus puts on Achilles' armor and how Achilles' team with the two steeds, who were sons of the West Wind and a Harpy, and the third, harnessed with them, which Achilles once captured in Eëtion's city and whose death, as a missed spear-throw by Sarpedon threw it into the dust, will soon be told. The booty from Andromache's native city plays a role throughout the entire *Iliad*, pointing again and again quietly toward this woman.

Let us note with what incomparable subtlety Homer, now that Patroclus stands there in Achilles' weapons and on Achilles' chariot, indicates the difference prevailing between the two.

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The friend's armor fits like a glove, Achilles' sword hangs over him, Achilles' shield he has on his arm, Achilles' helmet covers his head—only one thing Patroclus does not touch: Achilles' spear, which Achilles alone is capable of wielding. Only Homer knew this unique means of showing at this point how far Achilles was above all other Greeks. Now he begins to arm the Myrmidons. Finally called to battle again, they stand there like wolves greedy for slaughter. Exactly what concerns them is described: the number of their ships, their organization, the names of their leaders—among them the "grey knightly Phoenix," under whose command the fourth squadron stands. The proceedings have something military in our sense. Now Achilles addresses his Myrmidons. Now they advance. Now Achilles goes to take the new, untouched, precious goblet from the protective covers which his mother gave him when he set out, and now he prepares the sacrifice to Zeus and implores blessing and the glory of victory for the friend marching into battle. Magnificent, moving words; universally human thoughts. Already once, however, Homer has indicated what disaster lurks for Patroclus, and now he speaks it openly. A condition, we saw, is the only one under which Patroclus will return—a question of discipline: that he, after scaring the Trojans from the camp, immediately return to Achilles. As soon as such warnings are pronounced in a poem, we know in advance that they will go unheeded. That Patroclus lets himself be carried away and

never returns is now said in a few verses as Zeus's decree. A few words also suffice the poet to bring movingly before our eyes how Achilles, standing before his tent, looks over to watch the course of the battle.

Let us note how much Homer understands how to present the course of what happens, however strange it may be, as the natural one. Achilles begins already now to assume a nature as if he no longer belonged to the wandering men. As if he were beginning to dissolve into spirit. We do not ask why he does not accompany the friend—not for the sake of the Trojans or Greeks, but for his own sake, to know him preserved from the disaster whose arrival he sensed.

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We no longer ask any questions at all concerning Achilles' actions that would necessitate applying a human scale to him. I remind you how much we unlearn this in the final books of the *Nibelungen* with Kriemhild and Hagen. We feel a compulsion is at work that the fates of these people, who cast off the human, come to their fulfillment. In place of earthly weakness (which occurs so beautifully in Shakespeare's Coriolanus when his mother lies on her knees before him) and divine mercy, which turns things toward the good, relentless fate reaches for the scourge to whip those chosen by it as victims further along their road.

Moods of this kind, however, only break forth in moments. The parade and the departure of the Myrmidons and the intervention in the battle have something joyful, festive. The individual deeds of Patroclus are splendidly depicted. At the same time, the great terror that seizes the Trojans; how the beginning of their flight comes; how it becomes ever wilder; how Hektor, too, flees toward the city and Patroclus, close on their heels, cuts off a part of the Trojan mass and slaughters them. Entire rows of executed comparisons enliven the description—broadly spun-out nature scenes, as if the poet only now wished to pour out his store of images in full abundance; we ourselves forget Achilles' warning in the delirium of victory and his urgent command to let the rescue of the camp suffice. We do not notice that it had long since been exceeded by Patroclus. Outlawed, he is already forfeit to destruction, and only the opportunity is needed to bring him to a

fall. This is now brought about again in a wonderful way by a magnificent episode that the poet weaves into his work. We remember the Zeus-begotten Sarpedon. If any individual parts of the *Iliad* could give rise to the thought that we were dealing with inserted pieces of concurrent poems, then the pieces containing Sarpedon's fate might tempt us to it. Taken roughly together already, just as the *Iliad* contains them, they sound like a whole existing for itself.

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I spoke of it already: the language in which they are told assumes a uniquely lyrical sound. As if a music invented by Gluck belonged to them, while the other parts of the *Iliad* remind one of Handel. But it would lose a part of this delicately lamenting song-tone—which is effected by the contrast of the tone against the rest—if we took the episodes of Sarpedon out of their surroundings so that these pieces stood alone beside one another. This alone would speak against a *hymnos* dedicated to Sarpedon conceived as existing solely for itself. What completely pushed back this thought, however, is the observation of how important each of the parts of the *Iliad* concerning Sarpedon is in its place for the other parts. For Patroclus' sake, so that for his sinking the introductory overture, as it were, may be created, Homer lets the death of Sarpedon precede his death here as a sign of the destiny that Zeus is unable to change.

In beauty and depth, the death of Sarpedon corresponds to the representation of his revival previously dedicated to this hero. We may place ourselves over against Homer at the point of firm expectation that his poetry at no place contains parts of lesser value. His self-criticism stood at equal height with his creative power. There is also a continuous ascent to be felt within his works. In this, only Goethe equals Homer, whose later perfected works give their most beautiful at the conclusion. So too Schiller. Not everywhere Shakespeare; also the Greek tragedians, for our feeling, usually not. The episode concerning Sarpedon is distinguished by its extension. Working the more strikingly as Sarpedon's character means nothing for the *Iliad*. Had the poet let himself be led further than he intended by a certain personal sympathy for the hero drawn in such delicately ideal lines by his hand? Not impossible. The figures of a poem

finally gain a certain power over the poet. Goethe confessed how it happened with him in *Götz* with Adelheid, with whom he himself fell in love, so that he fashioned her more seductively than the plan of the play allowed.

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Before Zeus comes to the decision to let Sarpedon perish now, a theoretical discussion takes place between him and Hera. Zeus wants to rescue his favorite again. Hera makes clear to him what consequences this must have in general for Olympic relations regarding the other children of gods, for whom the others indeed would not be permitted to intercede. Zeus sees this and yields. On the other hand, Hera thinks again that by the way in which, instead of suddenly transposing Sarpedon himself safe and sound out of the fight into his kingdom, one at least lets his corpse be carried thither uninjured, an honorable substitute for the lost life could be created. And so it happens. Sarpedon succumbs. Apollo, however, carries the fallen one, over whom there had been furious fighting, to the bank of the Scamander, where he is washed and endowed with freshness anew, as if nothing had happened to him. Then the two brothers Sleep and Death lift him up to carry him away through the air to Lycia. We know how the plastic art of the Greeks took possession of this scene, upon whose representation that of the burial of Christ goes back.

At Sarpedon's fate, the feeling repeats itself in us that the great Asia Minor realm of Priam was designed for inner peace. Sarpedon is strong, as the Trojans in general are not inferior to the Greeks in physical strength, but he is not warlike by nature. Already among the Greeks it showed itself how their actual existence was of a peaceful kind; again and again, it is the gods who incite Trojans and Greeks into the fight. To a far higher degree, however, Priam's rule rested on quiet, civic labor of life.

After Sarpedon's fall, it remains for Hektor and Patroclus to measure their strength. Zeus, however, decides that Hektor should initially turn toward the city, fleeing in retreat, so that Patroclus, lured quite into his destruction, may act to the utmost contrary to the commands of Achilles. It comes so far that the attempts of the Greeks, under Patroclus' leadership, to

scale the walls of the city would almost have been crowned with success, had Apollo not put an end to Hektor's hesitation, whose fight with Patroclus over the corpse of the charioteer Cebriones, thrown to death by Patroclus, develops into a mighty scene.

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Homer lets the lion and the storm wind enter to lend the duel the highest splendor, as if he were calling upon them for the first time. If we, looking backward, recall all the instances where lion and storm have already intervened, repetitions and monotony would almost seem necessary. But these do not occur. Homer always knows how to conjure up new perspectives before us, whose dramatic interest constantly lies in different points. We think he must have spent his life observing fighting lions in the wild mountains, with shepherds and woodcutters, did other passages not tempt us to the thought that he was at home on the sea, and still others that he lived as a citizen or farmer in the plain. Shakespeare was familiar with everything that man pursues; yet he does not process it into such rounded images as Homer. It was in the nature of neither Goethe nor Schiller to operate with examples in this way. Dante is filled with views of national existence; he perhaps surpasses Homer in boldness, but his examples lack the aesthetic connection with that for which he uses them. They exist more ingeniously for themselves and do not combine into a poetic whole with what they are intended to explain. Goethe and Schiller, however, bring so much light and shadow into their descriptions of the event itself and let things stand before our eyes so bloomingly colorful in individual turns of phrase that no room remains for inserted examples. They would appear as foreign, scattered additions. Most rich in imagery is *Iphigenie*, which among Goethe's works most reminds one of Homer. We feel as if on ancient soil, and the language sounds as if Homeric people were speaking German. *Hermann and Dorothea* offers as a report such a colorful variety of facts with penetrating details that the special comparisons appearing here and there lead an existence of their own, like added ornament.

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This is also the reason why the *Odyssey*, rich in blooming images, can almost dispense with comparisons in many places. For even in the *Iliad*, Homer applies them only where the nature of the report requires and sustains them. In the last book of the *Iliad*, whose moral impression must not be distracted by any addition, we find only two comparisons, among which the last is perhaps the most beautiful of the poem. Zeus decides to give a propitious sign to Priam, who is departing for Achilles to plead for Hektor's body:

> He sent his goal-reaching eagle,
> Who is called the dark, the gloomy hunter;
> As wide as the gate of a rich man
> Opens broad on its hinges, so great he soars
> Over the city from the right side.

It is as if one were looking up oneself at the mighty animal as it is carried by the breezes. Homer does not burden the calm narration of the twenty-fourth book with other finery. In the *Odyssey*, as soon as the nature of the report permits, images break forth in abundance. In the struggle of annihilation of Odysseus against the suitors, the lion, the cattle, and the sharp-clawed birds of prey reappear. If one wanted to say that the *Odyssey* and *Iliad* could not stem from the same Homer, I ask which other poet could have been capable of singing the downfall of the suitors thus. No imitation of the *Iliad* is present here, but both works have sprouted from the same soil. In the fight with the suitors, we recognize the bloom of the *Odyssey*: how the husband of Penelope, grown weary through fates, finds again his old youthful heroism at the supreme moment where everything depends on his person. I have had to hear much about the changed tone of the *Odyssey*: the difference, in my feeling, lies in the nature of the subject matter, which is always of influence for Greek art. In the places where the *Odyssey* rises to the heroic, it is equal in power to the *Iliad*, just as the scenes playing in Priam's family correspond in their inner melody to the narrative style of the *Odyssey*.

It seems to me that Penelope's appearance before the suitors (there, where Telemachus, awakening to manhood, directs her to rest) could have arisen in Homer's imagination from the memory of Helena's appearance before the elders at the Scaean gate. Only the difference prevails here, too, that the scene in the *Odyssey* has a more pictorial effect. In this, the *Odyssey* is generally more consistently executed than the *Iliad*. The audience received not just the general grand differences between light and dark, which the *Iliad* offers in its evening, nocturnal, and morning mood-pictures, but, when the decisive things in the house were to be depicted, more delicate light effects, as the situation required. I recall the nineteenth book, how Odysseus and his son by night bring the weapons from the dark hall into the upper story, so that the suitors cannot use them in the attack upon them:

> And they carried away the helmets and shields,
> And the lances; but with the golden lamp,
> Going before them, Pallas Athena gave light.

What a painting! Thus Raphael lets Peter be led out of prison by the angel! I pointed out, upon the appearance of Agamemnon's envoys in Achilles' tent, the poet's attempt to use light effects: but as intentionally as Homer uses them in some places of the *Odyssey*, they are found nowhere in the *Iliad*. And read further how artistically other light effects follow in the nineteenth book of the *Odyssey* to heighten the feeling of the deep night and silence now reigning in the house. How Penelope appears in the middle of the dark, dead hall left by the suitors, moves her chair to the fire, and supervises the working maids who clear away the remnants of the banquet and set everything in order anew for the next day. How Odysseus, who has again assumed beggar-form, steals near, and the spouses meet for the first time. The uncertain flame of the fire, provided with fresh wood by the maids, which illuminates this scene, belongs to the entire picture here, just as Athena's golden lamp, which to Telemachus' astonishment suddenly illuminates the walls and columns as if with unearthly light, belonged to the previous scene.

Light effects of this kind are sometimes aesthetic-individual requirements. Into the translation of Voltaire's *Mahomet*, where the murder of Sopir is told and the old man lying lifeless before the altar is depicted, Goethe—I pointed this out once before—arbitrarily added the two verses to strengthen the sight:

> The lamp cast down its flickering light,
> And gloomily the blood flowed from his wound.

Goethe wrote his translation, although he was thinking of the Weimar stage, more for reading; Voltaire placed no value on such coloristic reinforcements. They are generally absent in his work. We do not know Homer's intentions and the nature of the audience whose applause he sought. The *Odyssey* appears as a poem intertwining within itself, for which the thought of solitary reading is not excluded; in the *Iliad* we have a whole consisting of parts, which could only be recited in sections to the listeners for whom alone it was calculated, which, in its simpler, more architectural effect, stands there all the more grandiosely. —

We are now prepared for Patroclus' downfall. We feel that he must not fall in a single combat, but like Siegfried be sublime above being conquered. And so a god must intervene, whose mighty hand makes him incapable of evading death. Three times Patroclus has plunged into the Trojans, slaying nine men each time; for the fourth time he wishes to repeat the attack, when unseen, because he shrouds himself in night, Apollo approaches from the rear and strikes him between the shoulders with his flatly spread hand.

The blow pierces us.

Apollo is the god of revenge. Of the pitiless, backstabbing retribution: when his name is mentioned, the scenes come to our memory first in which he takes revenge. How he, to atone for the dishonor done to his priest, sends the plague down from Olympus into the Greek camp, is shown in the beginning of the *Iliad*.

With Artemis he avenges his mother on Niobe and her sons. This is the spirit of the Apollo Belvedere, to which the Diana of Versailles belongs: both of equal, scornfully smiling beauty. Perhaps the artist of the Apollo Belvedere had in mind not the Niobe legend or another alone, but all scenes containing Apollo in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. The *Odyssey* too begins with the revenge of Apollo, whose cattle Odysseus' people slaughtered. The wonderfully malicious trait around the mouth of the Apollo Belvedere, which at the same time breathes such divine beauty, finds its explanation as a smile of satisfied thirst for revenge. Who does not know it when it plays around lips! Even unlovely ones. Moments that are not forgotten. Revenge does not seek the fight, but awaits moments when its victim is defenseless, to find full satisfaction in his prolonged suffering. It wants to see him fall and struggle.

> Three times he broke in upon the Trojans,
> Storming as if the war-god himself were coming,
> Wildly shouting, slaying three times nine Trojans.
> But when you for the fourth time, Patroclus,
> Like a demon wished to repeat the flight,
> There Phoebus met you in the throng
> And you recognized him not as he strode along,
> For clouds, thick and dark, shrouded him.
> Behind Patroclus he stood! Between the broad
> Shoulders he struck him with the flat hand,
> So that he grew dizzy; struck the helmet from his head,
> Which, rolling away under the horses' hooves,
> Rang out, and blood and dust soiled
> Its waving crest of hair. That was not to have
> Been until then—that the billowing horsehair
> Should so fall into the dust! For the helmet's lot was,
> A divine man's glorious head,
> Was to protect the friendly brow of Achilles!
> Yet Zeus gave it to Hektor now to wear!
> Yet for Hektor too destruction drew near!
> And the lance broke in Patroclus' hands,
> And from the shoulders, with torn strap,

The shield reaching to the ground fell off;
And the breastplate Phoebus Apollo loosened for him;
And as Patroclus stood stark and powerless,
One of the enemies bored the spear
Between his shoulders, yet seized by horror
He drew it out again to hurry away,
For he was afraid, as weaponless
As Patroclus stood, to fight with him.
He, struck to the marrow by the blow of Apollo
And with the wound of the spear in his limbs,
Turned backward into the press of friends.
Hektor, however, espied him! Pressed after him
Through the Greek ranks and thrust the lance
Into his loins.

Now the last verses of the book. How Hektor mocks the dying man, and how the latter, with sinking voice, predicts death at Achilles' hands for him. Not he, Hektor, but Euphorbus, that Trojan, had killed him: Hektor only robs him of the weapons.

My evil fate and Apollo have killed me,
And of men Euphorbus: you, as the third,
Rob me of my armor. But death already stands
Close beside you, and overmastering fate
And Achilles will take your life!

Now a strange turn, which confirms Hektor's near downfall. He and Achilles know what lies before them: but while Achilles is completely dominated by these thoughts, Hektor seeks to tear himself away from them again and again. In moments of newly awakened confidence, he shakes off the gloomy forebodings. We have already seen how Homer depicts this changing mood in Hektor. Even now his innate health of life breaks through again. He believes in a victorious Ilion, in the expulsion of the Greeks, and in a long peaceful rule over his native kingdom. He calls the last words to the dying Patroclus:

Predict evil to me as much as you will:
Who knows whether the son of Thetis might not yet
Breathe out his life under my spear.

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With that, he thrusts Patroclus' body from his lance with his foot and plunges after Automedon, Achilles' charioteer; but the immortal coursers carry him away. —

One more word about that passage where Achilles' helmet gets under the horses' hooves. I have given it only in summary. Voss had to transform the streaming words of Homer, for which he lacked the real intuition, into indefinite, high-sounding expressions. Full understanding of these verses will probably be lost forever. We feel how Achilles' helmet, to which something humiliating happened, had for Homer and his listeners a kind of hallowed existence, so that its fall was a great event that could not be dismissed briefly. Hence this detail in Homer, indeed, as it were, the apology for having to report such a shameful thing of so noble a piece of weaponry. —

In the tenth book it was set forth in what Achilles differs from the other Greek princes. He has something general, elementary. The small traits are missing from which the peculiar character of the others arises. Viewed from this perspective, Patroclus also belongs to the race of Achilles. His life's task was to be the friend's shadow. Every thought, it seems, Patroclus has shared with him until now. With him he has withdrawn from the fight. Silently attended the negotiations with Agamemnon's envoys, also said no word after they had gone. Neither with Odysseus, nor with Diomedes or Aias or the two Atridae do we see him personally in contact. Today for the first time Patroclus acts for himself! The national thought lets him rebel against his friend and be carried away to passionate reproaches. Let us note how calmly and unexcitedly Achilles listens to his companion's words and how soon the latter himself moderates himself again from his own feeling.

Homer bestows upon Patroclus, to make him fully suited for the role assigned to him in the *Iliad*, a special fate, as he did with Phoenix. As a boy, Patroclus killed the son of Amphidamas during a game of dice and was

brought by his father Menoetius to Peleus, who raised him together with Achilles.

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Peleus exhorts him upon departure to stand, as the elder, by the side of the fiery Achilles with moderating advice. This gives Patroclus the bound quality in his nature: he is only an official of the highest rank; also in the fact that he wears the weapons of Achilles and that his team drives him, lies symbolically that his deeds were accomplished more on behalf of a master than that they flowed from full, independent heroism. All the more mightily may Homer let Patroclus intervene. Achilles' invincible weapons become a part of his friend.

As long as Patroclus holds sway on the battlefield, the other heroes of the Greeks almost disappear. Where Patroclus appears, the decisive thing happens. Upon him all eyes are fixed. Therefore his overthrow is a blow as if the cause of the Greeks were lost.

Patroclus is nobler than the other Greek champions. No greed clings to him, no cruelty, no cunning, no envy, no arrogance. But he also has no advantages and therefore, in the sense of modern art, perhaps less reality. He does not become as visible as the others. He only feels well and humanly, performing his office beside Achilles. He appears in the fight like a meteor, casts blinding light, and disappears. A comprehensive epithet Homer has for Patroclus: *enēēs*, gentle, mild. So "mild and so brave" Zeus himself puts it, as a final critique, when he regrets the loss of Patroclus, and so too Patroclus is mourned as Achilles' "mild companion" by the women when they raise the lament over his body. It was he who once comforted the captive king's daughter Briseis with kind words.

With Patroclus, the last natural bond that tied Achilles to the cause of the Greeks is torn. From now on he stands alone, and his reconciliation with Agamemnon and what follows has nothing warmly human about it anymore. Achilles' now suddenly occurring yielding toward Agamemnon is only a means to an end. He wants to avenge his friend and then perish.

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Achilles from the beginning has consorted in his thoughts more with the superterrestrials than with his people. From Patroclus' death onward, he wanders about completely like one banished from life.

Seventeenth Book

The seventeenth book follows the sixteenth so exactly as if they formed a whole. Also, both apparently have the same content, since the fight over Patroclus' corpse appears as the natural continuation of his heroism and fall. The true content of the seventeenth book, however, is the heroism of Menelaus, to whom the poet now permits the full abundance of his strength to work. We shall see under what restrictions this highest unfolding of Menelaus occurs.

> Atreus' son Menelaus saw Patroclus'
> Fall, and pressing through the foremost ranks
> Of the combatants to him, he circled him,
> As the cow paces around her young calf,
> Before which she has brought no other into the world.
> With raised shield and heavy lance
> He protected the dead, threatening destruction
> To him who touched him. But the son of Panthous
> Addressed him: "Menelaus, ruler of peoples!
> Leave the fallen one, for I was the first
> Who hit him, I have the first right!
> Away, lest it cost you your life!"
>
> But Menelaus, raising his voice angrily:
> "Father Zeus," he cried out, "shall so much insolence
> Boast as if the lion's or the panther's
> Or the wild boar's strength were paired with yours?
> Shall Panthous' sons be allowed to mock me
> With impunity as the worst among the Greek warriors?
> Did Hyperenor not, when he reviled me,
> Learn in dying that the strength of his youth
> Did not protect him? He will never to his parents

And to his wife turn his steps back!”

“And you neither! Back! Or damage will make you
Wise!”
And Euphorbus: “My brother
Have you slain? His young wife,
Who longingly awaits him in the chamber,
And the parents have you with unspeakable
Mourning filled? Now I wish to be the avenger
Of our misery! It shall have no end
Before I, with these hands, place your head
In the hands of my father and my mother Phrontis,
Together with your weapons.
But forward! that my words may now
Turn into fear and terror for you!”
Therewith he threw the spear. But the bronze’s
Point bent around and did not pierce the Atridan’s shield.
He, however, raising his thoughts to Zeus,
Hit the retreating one in the throat’s
Lowest root, so that the lance-point
Sharply emerged from the neck. Down he plunged
With a mighty blow, and the weapons rang.
And into his hair, which was lovely as the Graces’
Full locks, into whose thick strands
Silver and gold were interwoven,
The dark blood flowed as he lay there.
As a man has the slender shoot of the olive tree
Carefully planted in the wind-protected,
Quiet valley, where springs moisten the soil,
And there it stands in the ornament of white blossoms,
And a whirlwind arises and twists it
Out of the earth, and stretched out
It lies there: so lay the son of Panthous,
And Menelaus robbed him of his armor.

How Homer pulls us into the fate of Euphorbus and his people. Only twice is he spoken of in the *Iliad*. For the course of the poem he is of no significance. But his existence has something unforgettable. We must, in order to become aware of the full extent of his existence, transpose ourselves back into the sixteenth book, where Homer tells how Euphorbus attacked Patroclus, and into the twelfth, where Hyperenor perishes.

I had told Patroclus' death in the sixteenth book only in summary and now make up for what was omitted. It concerns Patroclus, how he stood there after the blow of Apollo:

> From his shoulders the shield fell to the ground
> And the firm bands of the breastplate tore,
> And as if stunned he stood: there, between the shoulders
> The spear hit him, which a Dardanian warrior
> Brandished at him: Euphorbus, Panthous' son,
> Who in combat with the lance, and with the steeds,
> And in the flight of feet far surpassed the comrades
> Who learned the trade of war with him.
> Twenty others had he in the strife of chariots
> Overtaken with the fleeting horses:
> He first, o knightly Patroclus,
> Stabbed with the lance at you and yet, because you stood firm
> Unshakable, he drew it again
> From your naked flesh, in order to escape.

Now therefore, where Euphorbus returns to fetch the armor of Patroclus, whom he robbed of life so treacherously, almost as Diomedes once did to Rhesos, revenge overtakes him.

Now however, what befell his brother Hyperenor. At the conclusion of the fourteenth book, Trojans are listed almost catalog-like who perished in battle, among them Hyperenor, regarding whom Homer at this point relates without visible reason where Agamemnon's lance hit him:

> But the son of Atreus stabbed Hyperenor

Below the ribs into the entrails,
So that darkness covered his eyes
And the soul flew out of him from the wound.

Why these details with an unknown warrior of whom we, it seems, shall never hear again? Only in the seventeenth book, at the death of Euphorbus, is the question answered. Those verses of the fourteenth book formed the entrance to the tragedy. But already in the third book Homer mentions Panthous as one of the elders before whom Helen appeared above the Scaean gate (from which the way led to Dardania). And also Polydamas, who enters into the action in many books and occupied such a significant place beside Hektor, was a son of Panthous, and I miss in the later books of the Iliad the passage where his downfall is also related.

The question is, to be sure, whether Homer did not intentionally leave the tragedy of Panthous and his sons without a conclusion. There is nothing in the character of Polydamas, as often as he enters into the action and offers advice, that would be capable of development. Like Aeneas himself, he intervenes without characteristic signs of a peculiar nature. Like Idomeneus, he plays a role that requires no conclusion. A tragic downfall would let too much light fall upon him.

The figure of Euphorbus lived on so vividly in Greece that Pythagoras is said to have claimed that the soul of Euphorbus had passed into his own.

Let us observe how the conclusion of the episode of Euphorbus transitions into the pictorial. The neck, from which the lance-point emerges. The feminine-beautiful hair, interwoven with gold and silver, into which the blood flows. The magnificent image of the young, slender olive tree standing in bloom. Already before, in his manner, Homer had brought the young cow, which paces around her first-born calf, into the midst of the battle, and so now the olive tree shooting upward in deep silence. How surely he connects this with the report of the battle, and finds the way back into the fight in the immediately following image of the lion tearing the young cow. And again this image unites itself involuntarily with the preceding one, as if the same cow were being spoken of. One perceives at

the entrance of the seventeenth book how Homer has now found his style and introduces, in the lightest transitions, the images that command his imagination.

Let us also observe what a different inner structure the story of Panthous and his sons has, compared with that of Sarpedon. With Sarpedon, the tragedy lies in the fact that Zeus rescues him again and again, only to let him perish at last; with Euphorbus and Hyperenor, a necessity takes place that springs from the characters. Hyperenor provokes Agamemnon (as we are told, to be sure, only by report) through mocking speeches about Menelaus.

Euphorbus, wise and cautious by nature, hears of the downfall of his brother and dares to attack Menelaus blindly. Thus the fortune of the brothers collapses.

But let us now observe how Homer, corresponding to the earlier procedure that he maintained toward Agamemnon during his aristeia, at this very point of the poem where the aristeia of Menelaus begins, brings forward again the disparagement concerning Menelaus' un-warlike nature and how he burdens him with the destruction of the domestic happiness of the Dardanian family, which was reveling in full human bliss. In the same manner, the deeds of Agamemnon had previously been provided with a reproachful aftertaste. I had pointed that out. And in that which follows, we shall perceive an even stronger admixture of evil impressions. We must not let it go unnoticed with what tenacity Homer carries through this characteristic of the two sons of Atreus. And what various means he employs therein.

Homer finally lets Menelaus, then, now dominate the situation. Once more, the husband of Helen is given the opportunity to prove that it was worth the trouble to go to Troy on his account. Menelaus has only run along until now: now a decision of the highest kind approaches him, and he does not pass the test. Henceforth he can no longer be counted among the best of the Greek army. He lacks the compelling sense of honor. He needs someone beside him, or above him, to whose words he submits. And Menelaus

knows that. Let us see how Homer goes to work in order to give this direction to our judgment of Menelaus.

When painters have to carry out more extensive compositions, they proceed differently in the treatment of the individual figures than when it is a matter of only one or a few figures. Coloring and the distribution of light and shadow offer no difficulty in the latter case, but allow one to follow nature closely. There, on the other hand, what share of light and color falls to the individual depends upon general conditions.

Likewise in the short folk-song or the romance, full illumination can be lent to individual figures; in the epic, however, where many figures demand their right to be visible, another law enters. Here regard must always be had for the whole, and only if we too keep the whole in view do we understand the appearance of the individual here or there. To be sure, the situations which the Iliad and Odyssey offer are mostly so intelligible that nothing seems to be missing; yet if we consider them so that all other situations are simultaneously before our eyes, their content and their significance expand. In the Nibelungen — or as the title of the poem may have read earlier: in "Kriemhild's Revenge" — the narration of the murder of Siegfried at the beginning, or the report of the downfall of the Burgundians at the conclusion, would certainly not fail of its effect even then if they were recited, torn from the whole, to people to whom the rest of the epic was unknown. Yet if we let the other events form the background, only then does the true effect enter. Likewise in the Iliad and Odyssey the individual scene is heightened to the highest effect only through the co-resonance of the rest. In the folk-song and romance, no unexplained residue remains. The song of the King of Thule sung by Gretchen receives no addition of content from the scene into which it has been inserted: it exists and rests upon itself. Such smaller songs may be painted as if with clear colors upon a gold ground, and find sufficient accompaniment in a few strokes upon the guitar or piano. Hamlet's monologue on suicide, however, or Faust's soliloquy introducing the first act, require the entire remaining tragedy. Faust and Wallenstein and the Prince of Homburg are to be compared to complicated orchestral works, in which the momentarily intervening individual

instrument becomes effective only in harmony with all the others. And so every book of the Iliad and of the Odyssey and every scene therein receives its true effect only in connection with the other scenes and books.

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Menelaus would differ little in our seventeenth book from the other leaders of the Greek army if we considered his appearance without remembrance of what preceded and what follows. Viewed only in the manner of a folk-song for itself, this book, like the others, would contain a number of combats in which Menelaus is more or less favored by fortune. Viewed in the manner of tragedy, however, these encounters have a deeper significance.

Hektor had — we saw — given the death-blow to the defenseless Patroclus, who was scarcely master of himself. The weapons he could not take from him, as would otherwise have been understood of itself, because they, struck off by Apollo's blow, already lay upon the ground. Hektor's greed for booty is stimulated by Patroclus' team. Once already he had promised it to Dolon, to his undoing; now he sees it racing away under Automedon's guidance and hastens after it. There, in the form of a Trojan, Apollo confronts him. Whether Hektor, even if he should overtake the team, thinks he will ever become master of the immortal steeds? Hektor pauses. Looking about him, he perceives how Menelaus is seeking to bring the weapons into safety. Flaring up like the flame of Hephaestus — we remember how in smithies the charcoal fire suddenly leaps up — Hektor rushes with a cry upon Menelaus.

And now that which is decisive for our judgment of Menelaus happens. He does what we cannot forgive him: he is startled! Homer's heroes, to be sure, know exactly how far their strength reaches. They give way when a stronger one comes. But be that as it may, neither Ajax, nor Odysseus, Diomedes, Idomeneus, Nestor, and also Agamemnon would not, at this moment, have left the dead Patroclus to the enemy. They would rather have gone to their destruction.

Homer lets Menelaus speak with himself. The surest means that a poet employs in order to initiate us into the feelings of one of his creatures.

Woe to me, if I lose the armor now!
And Patroclus, who went into death for me!
Everyone would scold me, who looked on at it!

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But if I, alone and without aid,
Only because shame holds me, await Hektor,
And now hold my ground against the Trojans — for all Troy
Hektor leads against me as a single man?
Yet why reflect? — He who with the man
Whom the deity obviously favors,
Engages in combat, fights against the deity,
And the roller of calamity goes over him!
No one in the army will blame me for it,
If I give way to the god-favored Hektor.
If only the battle-cry of Ajax were audible!
We should win, if he stood by me!
We should take the corpse of Patroclus from the Trojans
Victoriously and carry him to Achilles!
Always still an advantage in all calamity!

"Thus conscience does make cowards of us all," Shakespeare lets Hamlet say, when it was a matter not of weighing, but of seizing. Menelaus is neither powerless nor cowardly, but he thinks where he ought to strike thoughtlessly. First Menelaus thinks of the rescue of the weapons! The standpoint of the businessman, which is also that of his brother and partner. Only then come Patroclus and honor. He remembers that Patroclus fell for him. The corpse and the weapons — those of Achilles! — lie before him. Now it occurs to him what the Greeks would say. All his scruples, however, are quieted by the sentence: he who strives against him whom the gods protect, lifts his hand against the gods themselves! Yet how much that was only an excuse learned by heart, in which Menelaus himself did not believe, is revealed by the next following thought: if only Ajax were there, then let gods be gods. And finally: if he and Ajax rescued the corpse, they would bring it to Achilles and perhaps move him to enter the combat again.

Only if we take in everything else that we otherwise know of Menelaus, does this monologue gain completely crushing weight for him. Let us remember, in contrast to this absence of heroism, that scene where Odysseus in similar abandonment, when all the Greeks were passing him in full flight, had taken counsel with himself:

> Woe is me! What do I experience! What a loss,
> If I with the others, conquered by fear,
> Now lost my courage! More terrible still,
> If I, so quite abandoned, were captured!
> But why think now? One thing I know:
> Cowards seek their salvation in flight — but he
> Who reckons himself among the first men of the people,
> He holds out in the battle and stands his man,
> Whether he may hit or be hit!

How much easier the resolution would have been for Odysseus then, to flee like the others. It was a matter of his person alone: he had no dead man, no weapons to defend. Even Diomedes, who had dared the combat with the gods themselves, let himself be carried away then by the panic. The questions which Odysseus put to himself were of a purely theoretical nature. Are you, you who have not lost your head, justified in going backward? No! Homer knew, when he composed Menelaus' monologue, exactly how he had let Odysseus deliberate with himself earlier. These pieces require each other for mutual explanation. In individual words they agree. Odysseus stands at the height of tragic feeling, Menelaus' monologue belongs in comedy: Homer delivers in it a masterpiece of involuntarily comic self-characterization. The intentionality of his procedure is not to be mistaken. The comparison with the lion which enters after Menelaus' flight, which lets itself be driven away by the shepherds armed with poles and the barking of dogs, had in the original version of the Iliad perhaps even likewise a comic aftertaste. The retreat of Menelaus, namely, only finds an end when he has reached his own people again, who had already given way earlier than he: Homer reports this with a certain bare brevity that brings me

to the thought. This at least we learn, that Menelaus, leaving weapons and corpse in the lurch, withdraws before Hektor and his people have arrived.

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I am inclined to regard the comparison with the retreating lion as not belonging here at all. In the same book later, namely (v. 650), when from the defense of the dead Patroclus, whom Menelaus indeed soon reaches again, it was necessary to desist for the second time, the example is used for the second time. Now the giving way of the lion is painted with more words, and its application fits better. All the more does it appear then in the right place now, as the comparison with a lion at the point where we now stand is immediately applied once more. Of Ajax, however. Ajax meets with him immediately after Menelaus' retreat. United, both seek to reach the corpse again. The armor Hektor has meanwhile carried off, yet his intention to strike the head of the dead man from the shoulders he does not now carry out: recognizing in Ajax the one superior to him, he at once lets his hands sink from the corpse, which he is just drawing toward him, and gives way. Ajax places himself with his broad shield before Patroclus, like a lion which, leading its young through the forest, is attacked by hunters. Here the comparison with the lion belonged better. Menelaus stands on the other side of the dead man, in order to keep him protected from there.

Now that enters for the sake of which the seventeenth book could also have been titled "The Guilt of Hektor."

Such great terror had the appearance of Ajax instilled into Hektor that he hurried back until into the midst of his own people. There Glaucus, Sarpedon's comrade-in-arms, confronted him.

Glaucus belongs to the minor persons of the first rank, of whose artistic treatment there was mention. [1] I spoke also of this, that Homer lets them disappear without a farewell scene. This procedure would bear the appearance of a lack of plan, did not the conscious method of its application assure us that the poet proceeded therein from principles. Every new case allows these things to be taken into consideration once more.

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[1] The manner of the composition of this book brings it about that certain observations must often be made anew.

Homer lets these minor persons go through no full fate before our eyes. It happens in life that people of high inner significance do indeed intervene in important events, yet do not experience reversals in their own nature. Thoas in Goethe's Iphigenie goes out of the tragedy as he entered: for him nothing has happened in it that would transform his character. But people without inner significance may also be accidentally drawn into important developments of fate. If, for instance, in a battle one of the retinue of the commander were made by him the bearer of an order, which he delivered happily with admirable boldness and thereby perhaps brought about the decision of the day, then this heroic piece could at the same time perhaps remain the only thing that distinguished the man, assigning him no higher place either as spirit or as character otherwise. In this double direction Homer lets those persons, whose innermost existence does not come into consideration for the composition of the Iliad, never emerge fully from the shadow and, even if in moments they receive however glaring a light, disappear again without a trace.

Glaucus enters magnificently in the second book, like Diomedes, as if Homer had much in view for him: the famous passage where Glaucus and Diomedes recognize each other as scions of families connected by old guest-friendship and exchange weapons. The story of the origin of Glaucus we receive here. The same element of soldierly honorableness is embodied in both. With that, however, Glaucus is also as good as finished: as a shadow of Sarpedon, he gives up all light to the latter. With Sarpedon he storms the Greek entrenchments, is wounded, stands by Sarpedon then in the latter's last moments and receives the dying man's legacy to lead the Lycians into the combat with double strength.

His heart still full of the loss of Sarpedon, he believes his corpse and weapons to be in the possession of the Greeks. His foremost interest is that these be forced to be given up. As Diomedes once had reproached Agamemnon with lack of courage, Glaucus now calls Hektor to account:

Mere phantom you of bravery!
Save the city with your Trojans alone now,
For we Lycians are tired of the eternal struggle
And of ingratitude. Who then would still
Trust you? You who abandoned the noble Sarpedon,
Your guest-friend, your comrade,
That he might become to the Greeks a prey and a booty?
He who, as long as life was still in him,
Rendered to you and the city such great services,
And now the dogs eat his corpse.
Yet we Lycians go! If you Trojans
Still had a trace of boldness within you,
We should now tear Patroclus over to us!
And then the Greeks would surely appear,
With Sarpedon's body and his armor
To buy the body and weapons of Patroclus.
Yet you do not dare to meet the gaze of mighty Ajax,
Weakling! not with your own.
And Hektor replied: Such a man
Prattles so foolishly! And I had believed
You were more than the others, but I was wrong.
The enormous giant-form of Ajax
I do not fear, but Zeus breathes into the soul of the best
Fear or courage, as it seems good to him.
Yet now hold to me and pay heed
To what I accomplish and whether of all Greeks
One, and if he were capable of ever so much,
Keeps me from the dead Patroclus.
And with a mighty voice he cried: Trojans!
Lycians! Hold your ground, until I appear again!
And soon reaching the people on the run
Who were to lead the weapons to the city,
He stood aside and shrouded himself in Achilles'
Armor, which once the mighty Uranions

Gave to Peleus, the father of Achilles; he gave it,
Highly aged, to his son; yet he was not
To reach high days in it.
Yet Zeus, who shows the ways to the clouds,
Saw from afar Hektor standing armed in the divine
Son of Peleus' weapons,
Shook his head and spoke with himself:
If you knew, how near death is to you!
This head's and these shoulders' defense
You dared not take for yourself! Once more

Shall mighty strength now stream through you,
In compensation, that after this combat
Andromache shall no more take the weapons from you.
And with his dark brows Kronion nodded,
Made the armor firm upon Hektor's limbs,
And the breath of Ares filled his breast.
Brilliantly standing there, he bellows at his own:
War-comrades of a thousandfold people,
Not for the sake of soldierly show-pomp
Did I call you here from your cities,
No! the Trojan women and children shall you
Save from the Achaeans, therefore I pay
Such reward: victory or destruction is the stake!
With him who brings the corpse of Patroclus,
I share the booty of the day, half and half,
So that he carries off as much of fame as I myself!
And with lifted spears the army
He pressed upon the Greeks and upon Ajax,
To tear the corpse of Patroclus from them.

Let us notice how, alongside the appeal to the purely human feeling of the Trojans, the calculation of booty forms the conclusion of Hektor's speech. This business-like standpoint is common to both Greeks and

Trojans, and it belongs, as has already been pointed out, to the peculiarities of Achilles alone to forget it at times.

Ajax recognizes the altered state of things in Hektor's attack. At his command now, Menelaus cries for help, as far as his call is able to reach the Greek princes, and the struggle for the body of Patroclus begins—the wrestling, the description of which has never been surpassed by the words of any other poet. The desperate struggle of the Burgundians, which forms the conclusion of the Nibelungen, would raise itself to an equal height were the German poet equal to him of the Iliad in this: that he did not always represent only individual heroes against one another, as even Homer did until the seventeenth book. But around Patroclus there develops a mass combat of all the bravest who still remain on the Trojan and Greek sides. The gift of employing light and shadow to heighten his effects comes to Homer's aid in the representation of the throng.

He lets those fighting for the body of Patroclus in the midst of the general battle be drawn about by a darkness that gradually increases to obscurity. Thus in the engagements of more recent times, the powder-smoke veiling the movements plays a part. While Greeks and Trojans seek to destroy each other in the hot sunshine, and, as far as the eye reaches, not a cloudlet is to be seen on the firmament so that the heat lets the combat gradually slacken, at the one spot surrounded by darkness an "iron din" rises incessantly to the heaven of bronze.

We feel that only Achilles is able to give the decisive turn here, and that the moment approaches when his mind is broken and he dominates the events again.

Without preparation, however, Homer lets nothing decisive happen: Homer's first remembrance of Achilles in this new state of things is, in his manner, a mere insertion:

> Yet Achilles knew nothing of the fall of Patroclus,
> Since the fight was close under the walls of the city.
> That from the gates of Ilion his friend

Would return victoriously, was his hope.
For his mother had confided to Achilles:
Neither with him nor without him would Patroclus
Tread the site of Ilion! And in this he believed.
But the mother did not say everything then!
And so his dearest comrade was gone,
Without his being aware of what had happened.

Upon these disconnectedly interspersed verses follow again forty verses of battle report with the conclusion just cited:

Iron-like it rang upward, through the realm
Of the barren airs toward the brazen heaven.

In such passages the reproduction of Homer's language becomes an impossibility. It is as if that which he wishes to depict sounded only out of the Greek words. German words are not able to echo that.

From the first mention of Achilles—the abrupt manner of which, as I repeat in view of similar things in earlier books, belongs to the consciously applied artistic means of the poet—it did not yet emerge how the news of death will reach Achilles.

Completely unprepared he was not, for what he feared had already been expressed by Homer at the departure of Patroclus. Let us remember our own experience, how in great illnesses of those close to us we foresee from the beginning their fatal course, but in the moments of highest danger we then do not believe in it, but cling hopefully to every favorable sign. In another interspersed episode, the message of mourning already draws nearer to Achilles: his steeds, at the orphaned chariot of Patroclus, know that he has fallen. What Homer reports here leads us at the same time into the region of the supernatural, to which the scene will soon be transferred.

Yet the steeds of Achilles, standing aside,
Wept, when they heard that Patroclus
Dead sank into the dust. Fruitlessly Automedon sought
First with the lash, then with coaxing words,

Then with threats and scolding to urge them on:
Forward they would not, not to the ships.

Over the yoke their flowing manes hang down to the ground, and Zeus takes pity on them. Shaking his immortal head, he thus addresses himself:

Why did we give you, unhappy steeds,
You who are unaging and immortal, to a mortal,
Only to experience human suffering with him?
For of all things that creep and breathe there,
No creature is so wretched as man is.
But with you and your radiant chariot
The son of Priam shall not boast!
Never! Already too much, that he of the weapons
Boastfully may glory, which shine around him!
Into your limbs will I pour courage and force,
That you may rescue Automedon to the ships.
For still must the Trojans remain victorious
Until the sinking of the day, when the darkness rises.

Zeus, therefore, looks to the relationship of rank even among the animals. Earlier already Hektor had offended against this when he promised the immortal team to Dolon: now the second offense, since he seeks to capture it for himself.

A magnificent scene follows: from their own impulse the steeds attack the Trojans. The untamable forward-storming of the horses reinforces our feeling that Achilles, too, will soon no longer be held back.

Further preparations for this moment soon follow. At every stage of this progress, however, the poet lets us tarry. In perfected artistic experience, he leads us further only with a hesitating hand. It lies not in the purpose of my work to give in detail that part of the seventeenth book from verse 450 to 590, which relates the battle from the voluntary combat of the steeds against the Trojans until the moment when the Greeks, in spite of all, flee toward the camp. I ask that these 140 verses be read in Stolberg, who comes nearer

to Homer here than Voss. Wonderfully it is depicted how the feeling of being defeated penetrates the Greeks in ever wider circles. How the prince of the Boeotians first turns to flight. How Idomeneus, whose lance breaks on Hektor's armor, follows him. How Ajax and Menelaus arrive at the resolution no longer to defend the body of Patroclus on the spot, but to carry it toward the ships. There we hear Ajax finally, in the midst of the darkness with which Zeus had clouded those fighting around Patroclus, call for Achilles:

> Would that someone now would announce to Achilles,
> That Patroclus sank down! But no one
> Can I recognize — dark night veils us.
> Zeus! Rescue the sons of the Greeks from the darkness
> And destroy us in the light, if it must be!
> And Zeus Kronion pitied the weeping one,
> And the sun shone over the battle.
> And to Menelaus turned Ajax:
> Do you see Antilochus anywhere? He shall to Achilles
> Give tidings that Patroclus is dead.

Menelaus discovers Antilochus. Homer holds fast even this moment of the forward-pressing highest necessity in lingering rest.

> And Menelaus looked round about
> Like an eagle, who before all birds

> Is of sharp sight. Him, as high as his flight carries him,
> The hare remains not hidden, who in the leaves
> Crouches close to the ground below: he plunges
> Down upon him and has him! Thus turned
> Round about, Menelaus, your radiant
> Glances, and at the left wing of the battle
> You saw Antilochus, as he his comrades
> Anew inflamed for the combat.

Let us notice how Homer persists in addressing Menelaus as *Thou.*

Antilochus we have already often encountered. He is one of the minor persons of the first rank whom the poet treats with special love. From the beginning Homer requires Antilochus for the poem. In a new example his art shows itself again: to mix among the heroes of the highest rank—in whose hearts divine and human powers wrestle, and for whom wavering fate reserves fortune and downfall equally—these simple figures, whose firm stamp, however, always offers the same sight.

Antilochus, the youthful son of Nestor, is thus called hither by Menelaus. He himself only now learns that Patroclus fell. Shaken he hears it. For this moment he becomes the principal person. Homer presents in Antilochus the type of the son in a serving relation to the father and to all surpassing him in rank or age. Antilochus subordinates himself. He executes commissions. Nestor, when in the Odyssey he remembers the youths fallen before Troy, says of him that no one reminds him so much of Telemachus as he. Homer lets the early-sunken Antilochus stand up again, as it were, once more in Telemachus. All the passages mentioning him, lying scattered in both poems, join together into a firmly outlined picture of the hero-son snatched away young. Even in the last book of the Odyssey Antilochus is named as the one whom Achilles loved before all other Greeks after the death of Patroclus.

To the camp of Achilles, then, Antilochus sets out. But the thought comes to Menelaus that Achilles, even if he wished to rescue the fallen friend now, would not be able to do so, because he is weaponless: — Patroclus, therefore, must be salvaged without Achilles' help. Menelaus and Meriones lift the body and carry it away, while the two Ajaxes follow for their protection.

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Only in musical pieces of Beethoven, when the composer in ever more sublime repetition of the theme cannot, as it were, quiet himself, should I know of anything to name that would be comparable to the dying away of the seventeenth book of the Iliad.

First Picture.

And they lifted the dead from the earth,
High and mightily stretched out, and behind them shouted the
Trojan people aloud, when they perceived him.
And like dogs they hurried after,
Who have the wounded boar before them:
Furiously they storm forth to rend him,
But when he, trusting in his strength,
Makes a turn, they start asunder fearfully.
So now the Trojans stormed in bright heaps
Forward with double-edged lances and swords:
But when the two Ajaxes turned about,
They stood and grew pale, and no one dared,
Stepping nearer, to attack the body.

Second Picture.

Thus they carried out of the battle-throng

Toward the ships the dead man. But there raged

Close at the back the combat. As fire flames out,

That breaks out in cities. The houses become

Ever fewer in the growing glow,

And the wind blows into it: so followed the storm

Of warriors and of horses incessantly

Them, who strode forward.

Yet they went,

Third Picture.

Like mules in the stony mountain-forest
Drag down great beams or mighty ship-timber
In quiet strength, and there runs
Sweat down from the weary bodies,

Thus they carried the dead man step by step further.

Fourth Picture.

But at the back the mighty
Ajaxes both warded off the Trojans: so checks
At the foot of the mountain stretching crosswise
The streaming floods hurrying wildly from the height into the deep
A forest-grown hill,
So that the waters divide to the right and left,
For they do not break through it, however much they rage.
Thus the Ajaxes both checked the fruitless
Storm of the Trojans. These, however, followed them.
Two in front: Aeneas, the son of Anchises,
And Priam's son, the radiant Hektor.

Fifth Picture.

Like a cloud of starlings or daws,
That flutter asunder with a shrill cry,
When they see the falcon, who small fowl
Threatens with murder, so flew the swarm of the Greeks
Under Aeneas and under Hektor's onset
Finally wildly asunder, of resistance
No longer mindful. Beautiful Greek weapons
Lay on the ground before and over the trench,
And the battle inclined, so it seemed, to flight.

The first picture from the side of the Trojans, the second from that of the Greeks, and so the rest. In the succession of hunt, fire, mountains, rushing mountain-water and the vault of heaven, the landscape built up with artistic intention unfolds itself. Again and again, an interval, as if we looked as though through rifts of the painting at the Greeks defending themselves

more and more weakly. The last look shows them arrived in bright panic before the entrenchments.

The comparisons of the seventeenth book are of great beauty. Again, the technical treatment of Rembrandt comes to my mind, who among painters possessed most of all the power to excite the imagination with a few lines so that it believes it has content-rich paintings before it.

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If we let the comparisons of the seventeenth book from beginning to end form a single row, touching one another without the rest, as in an illustrated book perhaps that one leafs through without paying attention to the text, they gain inner connection for themselves and form through the similarity of the views a chain, like tapestries rich in pictures bordering the path on festive occasions, whose content need have no connection with the events for whose glorification they just serve, but whose splendor offers to the eye only a pleasing point of rest. It seems to me as if the comparisons of the seventeenth book were interwoven into it with special care, because the poet had gradually become quite certain in their use.

Homer’s endeavor to depict in these comparisons the life of his people and the nature of the Greek land and army springs from his desire to appear quite modern to the generation for which he composed. Only then will a poet glorify the past for his listeners to their pleasure, if they never lose the feeling of their own existence. To connect ideal past and real present in poetry is one of the natural functions of the working creation of the imagination. The great artists seek to come as near as possible in their poems to the wishes of their public. A sign of our German modern plastic imagination, however, is to prefer too strongly either the one or the other of these two elements. Poetic products arise in this way which bore us either through forced antiquity or disturb us through too glaring a reflection of daily existence there.

To create narrative and descriptive poems is granted, let us say innate, to the peoples as far as we know them. If we encounter successful creations of this kind, it often seems as if they repeat in new form what had already been known, said, yes, already artistically treated by others before. All report of

extraordinary men who conquer or perish or do both at the same time. Always the same song turned differently. In all, the decisive thing happens at the conclusion. A broadly laid-out action gradually draws itself together, comes to a point, and the narration, the more it approaches the decision, takes on a swifter pace. In the beginnings of epic works of art, there rules at times a seeking for the right formation, a being unable to proceed or an over-hurrying.

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The poet is not able to hit the tempo of which he has need for the long way. Let the beginnings of the Nibelungen be taken into consideration: the poem loses itself into breadth and does not find the simple transitions; its narration appears sometimes as if glued together from fragments. Proceeding, however, he gradually learns to know his powers and feels what he has to do and to leave undone. Then, however, the necessity announces itself to arrive at the conclusion. In the Nibelungen as in the Iliad and Odyssey, only toward the conclusion does the path, which until then was wavering, transform itself into a smooth track. From the death of Patroclus onward the Iliad becomes the uniformly clear work of the poetic power which bears the name Homer. The river, which until then sometimes went in unequal current between pleasant banks, now hurries quickly away as a transparent element bordered by edges of noble stone. The last third of the Iliad can hardly be regarded anymore as divided into individual books. The occurrences wish to go forward. Nevertheless, there is need even here still of points of rest: but how artistically they are exploited!

In the beginnings of a narrative poem the entire stock of the expected events forms something like a dark mass which we see in the distance. Only the outlines impress themselves upon us there which bound it. The nearer we stride toward it, the more clearly it illumines itself and at the same time diminishes. Ever smaller becomes the stock of the unknown, and in the measure as it decreases before us, a stronger feeling seizes us to press forward to it. Finally, we feel: a few steps more, and everything lies at our back which at first lay before us as unknown. Soon the expectation dissolves into remembrance. Let us recall how at the conclusion of Goethe’s

tragedy the mortal part of Faust transforms itself into an immortal part, to which new paths open. We feel the necessity of this development.

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At the seventeenth book we perceive the approach of the end of the Iliad. Patroclus' death is the prelude for that of Hektor, which now stands close at hand. The seventeenth book contains in the combat for the body of Patroclus the first preparation for the return of Achilles to the battlefield: the fulfillment of that toward which our impatience was directed from the beginning of the Iliad onward. Those who hold possible an accidental coming together of the Iliad from all sorts of folk-songs stringing themselves to one another, I should like to ask whether the effect of the seventeenth book were conceivable without the view toward the following and toward the preceding. Whether the aristeia of Menelaus would be intelligible without knowledge of his mixture of character making itself noticeable through all the books: the unsuccessful heroism, the eternal willing, which is interrupted again and again by reflections on his own fate and by evil accidents. The nearer we approach the conclusion of the Iliad, the finer becomes the moral elaboration of the individual figures; yet only of those who matter to the poet. Homer lets Menelaus appear as brilliantly as the circumstances at all permit. He shows the impossibility of further resistance, which commands Menelaus to withdraw, while at the same time we experienced step by step how Menelaus was not able to prevent Hektor from carrying off the armor of Achilles, which sank down from Patroclus' shoulders at the blow that Apollo led, yes, would have captured the body of Patroclus himself, if Ajax and, when he grew weary, Achilles himself had not stepped in. Homer compels us again and again to remember what has gone before.

The following book brings the entrance of Achilles, one of the mightiest scenes of all poems known to us. But it, too, only arriving at full effect when the whole Iliad counts as prelude and postlude.

Eighteenth Book

The day of Trojan battle-fortune has run its course, and the battle, whose conclusion will be Hektor's death, stands imminent. So smoothly has Homer not narrated until now. The fabulous, however, mixes into the course of events ever more overpoweringly.

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The gods, who until then were more distant spectators of the highest rank, become co-acting persons. Divine and human relations flow through one another, as if it must be so. —

Achilles has well noticed from his camping place the sudden streaming back of the Greeks to the ships, but has not understood it. He divines the death of Patroclus, as Antilochus confirms it. An outburst of despair. Lying on the ground Achilles dishevels his hair. Around him the howling handmaidens. Antilochus holds his hands, lest he cut his throat. So terribly does Achilles cry out, that Thetis in the depths of the sea perceives the bellowing.

Thetis has a twofold existence. Once with her father, at the bottom of the waters, from where she can easily reach her son; then again as the wife of ancient Peleus, at home in his palace, where she expects Achilles back in vain. The thought of a double existence seems familiar to Homer. Let us remember how Heracles dwells as a shadow in Hades and at the same time, received among the gods, inhabits Olympus immortally with the other gods. Only in the palace of Peleus is Thetis the humanly loving mother; on the shore of the sea near Troy she remains, although in immediate proximity, yet as if separated from her son by a partition: the immortal nymph from the mortal. Her intercourse with Achilles here has something cool, ghostly; she comes to share his pain, but leaves him again as if he were strange to her. She does for him what she can, not out of human-maternal love, but because as a goddess she takes part in the fate of him who, to her the never-aging immortal, had been forced as a mortal son by circumstances which she resisted from the beginning.

In the depths of the sea already Thetis begins to weep, and with her weep the nymphs, her sisters, who like her inhabit the palace of the father. In that

Homer fills ten hexameters with the names of these goddesses, he lets them sound into our ear like a soothing beat of waves.

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Perhaps these melodic names were connected with the musical recitation of the Iliad. All of them beat their breasts, when from Thetis the beginning of the lamentation went forth. She tells them, as if they knew of nothing, the cause of her tears. All of them emerge with her, and played about by the waves of the sea, they reach the Trojan sand, where the ships of the Myrmidons stand. Taking the head of her son into her lap, she asks what new sorrow oppresses his heart. Again, as if she knew of nothing, since everything that had happened was nonetheless known to her.

Achilles reports, Patroclus has fallen. The weapons, which the gods gave to Peleus and he to the friend, Hektor wears. Better it would have been if Peleus instead of an immortal had taken a mortal wife. Never would Thetis receive him at home again, before he had not avenged the friend and Hektor, slain by his spear, had not breathed out his spirit.

Weeping Thetis replies, short would his life be, for immediately after Hektor’s death an end of his career was also destined for him.

Let us notice how everything that follows rests upon the fact that with Hektor’s death also that of Achilles will be sealed. Ever anew Homer repeats this. Only thus do Achilles’ last deeds become intelligible. From the beginning this foreknowledge of the future has separated him from his comrades. Let us see how Hektor too harbors the same presentiment, ever again however is torn back by father, siblings, wife and child into the belief, innate in us all, in a good turn of things.

To the mother Achilles now reveals his change of mind toward the Greeks. His calamity is to let every feeling that overcomes him extend to the last consequences. It is unthinkable to him that Patroclus’ death could be atoned for otherwise than through Hektor’s death. Indifferent, whether his own joins it. Why not rather destroy Troy and drag Hektor home as a prisoner? To that Agamemnon might have come. The feeling of the

impossibility of his own further existence dominates Achilles at the same time however.

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Through his origin he sees himself delivered over to destruction without rescue. Nor does Thetis try to bring him to a middle way. She feels like him that this mixture of mortality and immortality excludes the leading of an ordinary human life. Let us consider the train of thought of the conversation.

> Child, why do you weep? What makes your soul sad?
> Speak it out, conceal nothing from me. To you indeed
> Zeus granted, what with uplifted hands
> Once you requested: that the Greek hosts
> In need of you fled to the ships?
> Heavily sighing Achilles said: o mother!
> That the Olympian Zeus has granted me.
> But to what end, since my companion sank down?
> My beloved Patroclus! Whom I loved
> As my own head, him have I lost
> And my armor he wears, who murdered him —
> Hektor! this wonder-work of beauty,
> Which the gods once gave to Peleus,
> When to the mortal they gave you, the immortal.
> Would you had remained with the sisters!
> Would a mortal had become my mother!
> That not thousandfold sorrow also to you
> For a dead son moved the soul.
> Never more do you see me return to the homeland,
> For I will not dwell among men,
> Before the murderer has not atoned for the robbery
> And his soul has breathed out!
> Shedding tears however said Thetis:
> Swiftly will your life fly away after his,
> Child, as you speak: for immediately after Hektor you die!
> Deeply breathing Achilles gave her answer:

Die I would here! Since fate to me
Did not grant to defend the dying friend,
Who so far from the fatherland sank down.
And I stood not beside him, to protect him!
Neither Patroclus, nor the many friends,
Whom the divine Hektor threw down,
Was I help and comfort: here at the ships
I sat given over to futile mourning,
Strong as none among the Greeks! I!
Such a warrior! May in the council-assembly
Many a one better than I also stand his man. —

Would that discord would depart from the immortal gods
And from mortals out of the soul!
And the anger, which seizes the most reasonable,
Which sweet as the gently-gliding honey
Then in the breast of men like steam expands!
Thus angered the ruler of the people Agamemnon
Me — but let us let that rest, what has happened!
Let us tame with force the heart in the bosom!
Now I go hence, to give Hektor death!
Then I die gladly, if Zeus commands my end
And the immortal gods demand it of me.
Sank Heracles nonetheless, who was so dear to Zeus.
Once I shall lie like him, if it is destined for me.
Before that however I will acquire fame!
And the Trojan women — with both hands
Shall they dry the tears from the cheeks.
Sense shall they now, how long I idle
Held myself back from the combat! What you say,
Mother, because you love me, cannot hold me.
And the goddess: Your words, my child,
Hit the right, the true. Evil does not he,
Who renders help to the distressed comrades.

But your weapons lie on Hektor's shoulders.
Indeed, not long will they shine around him,
For death lurks for him: you however
Hold yourself far from the combat, until I return.
Tomorrow, I bring you your new armor.
And to the sisters she said: Dive into the deep,
To give tidings to the father, what has happened,
While I myself hasten to Olympus,
Whether Hephaestus for me forges new weapons.

The most important point in Achilles' speech is the passage where he curses his insane anger and coming to Agamemnon, nevertheless almost breaks out again into the old reproaches against the king. His words: "But let us let, what has once happened," are the sign of inner liberation. The passionate self-conquest, with which he judges himself in this speech, manifests the progress of his nature. Thetis knows nothing to reply. Only one thing more is incumbent upon her: to provide that the days still allotted to her son pass away in the radiance of fame.

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The poet returns to the Greeks, who defend Patroclus' corpse. Three times the two Ajaxes have thrown Hektor back, ever again he presses forward, when Hera, behind Zeus' back, sends Iris to Achilles, to announce to him the danger that Patroclus' corpse would be lost. In what weapons he should fight, asks Achilles. Without weapons he should go, replies the goddess; only become aware that he was there, should the Trojans. And now the scene, how Athena surrounds Achilles' head with light-radiance and he hastens to the trench. There he makes a halt. Standing on the height of the wall, he "did not mix with the Achaeans." Exactly rather did he follow the specific instruction, which his mother had given him. Standing at the trench, he cries out. At the same time Athena cries out.

How ignorant we are nonetheless toward the two different words, which Homer here applies for "crying." Obviously, he wishes to say that Achilles lets his accustomed battle-cry resound, Athena at the same time however with her voice indicates that she too was present. Only to the Greek ear of

the Homeric time could it be perceptible, what mixture of human heroic bellowing and divine thunder-voice here united to a terrible harmony. Stolberg translates:

> There he stood and cried, also cried especially Athena,
> And infinite terror seized the hosts of Troy.

Voss on the other hand:

> Placed there, up he cried; also aside Pallas Athena
> Raised the sound; and the Trojans through-raged immeasurable uproar.

Voss corresponds far less to the wording of Homer, but manifests the endeavor to make noticeable the difference of the kind of the cry so clearly indicated by Homer. If one wished from the sound of the two Greek words to indulge in conjectures, what Homer meant, then in Achilles' crying the crying out in breadth, in the crying of the goddess the piercingness of the whistling storm could be heard. In any case a difference was intended.

> Just as it clangs, when the trumpets sound
> Around the city, when the life-destroying enemy comes,
> So sounded the mighty voice of Achilles.

> But when they heard him, Achilles' brazen
> Battle-cry, then it shuddered through the Trojans.
> Their steeds stood and turned about.
> Calamity they scented. The chariots' drivers
> Shrank together, when they saw blazing light
> Above the head of Achilles flare up.
> But Athena had ignited it there!
> Thrice bellowed Achilles over the trench,
> Thrice heard him trembling the Trojans,
> Twelve of the bravest men of their army
> Broke down with their retinue suddenly.
> But the Greeks, by the streaming arrows
> Unmolested, drew Patroclus' corpse

Gently hither, and on a bier laying him
They stood sadly around. There followed Achilles
Bitterly weeping the train, which bore him away,
Weeping for him, whom he with horse and chariot
Sent out and who did not return again.

Never has the effect of the mere presence of a man been depicted like here. Never also the sudden reversal of circumstances. The Trojans are as if blown away. It is not even necessary to ward them off. They are no longer there. They steal quietly away.

Homer leads us to the Trojans before the Greek camp. Upon the scenes of highest heart-agitation follow the consultations of Hektor with his own, what now to do. They have a certain sound of political negotiation. That opinion conquers, which is the ruinous one. The *in perniciem ruere* of Hektor takes its beginning. So pure-washed from all that preceded has Achilles re-entered, so sublime does he stand there as he who has consecrated himself to death, that our sympathy for Hektor almost turns into aversion. And the poet does not cancel this turning away of our participation from Hektor by the report about the negotiations of the Trojans, which now ensue.

So agitated are the Trojans, that they, instead of thinking of the supper, hasten to the assembly. None dares to sit. Standing upright they deliberate. All tremble. First speaks Polydamas, the son of Panthous, standing nearest to Hektor, born in one night with him, to whom past and future are manifest — a historically educated general, we would say today. More famous through speaking than through the lance. To Troy immediately to withdraw and to defend the city, is his view.

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In many passages of the Iliad, where it really comes down to the finer content of the language, Homer applies a decisive word, which only in this passage occurs in him alone. “Prattle about things as you will,” runs the beginning of the speech of Polydamas, “I say: away, into the city! Not even so long should we wait, until it becomes day! It is far to the walls!”

When that man still was angry with Agamemnon,
Were the Greeks easier to combat.
Also I shouted, when we came to the ships.
But now have I fear of the son of Peleus.
He wants more than the others! No more does it count,
Here in the plain to knock about,
Who the stronger be: now is fought
For the houses and wives. Believe me! go!
Up into the city! It is as I say! Believe me!
Still holds the night back the son of Peleus,
But meets he us tomorrow here still,
Then learns many a one him to know! Glad will he be,
Who on the flight into the city then still gets in.
But the dogs and vultures eat most.
Would my ear never such things perceive!
Follow you my word, gladly or reluctantly,
Then on the market-place hold we us through the night,
But us protect the city, the high towers
And the gates and in the gates the strong
Inserted well-smoothed wings.
Tomorrow however at daybreak stand we
High on the battlements of the wall, and who from the ships
With us to combat came, woe to him!
Backward must he again. Fruitlessly would
Around the walls his steeds fly,
But in he gets not, them to destroy,
For the dogs eat him, before that will be!

Always indicates Polydamas Achilles only, without that he dared his name to speak out.

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Hektor takes the word. The way, how he Polydamas' opinion with, one might say, economic reasons rejects, is characteristic. He reckons to the Trojans up, how much this war the city already cost. Zeus would help further. Close to the sea are the Greeks already pushed back. The supper

wants one now to prepare and Hektor makes a joke, as it from a modern orator's platform not better made could be — if from the Trojans one for his property concerned be, eh, the concern is easily to be helped: he may now his friends treat, to whom it today better taste will than perhaps tomorrow the Greeks. Early in the day must the battle its progress have. Desires it Achilles, therein to take part, so much the worse for him then; meet will he him, and the god of battles and of victory, whose decision none foreknows, would between them the choice make.

With bright applause is Hektor's speech received. Pallas Athena had them the spirit blinded, says Homer, who Athena to the disadvantage of the Trojans often omnipresent be lets. While the Trojans themselves the supper prepare, speak the Greeks the night through of Patroclus. Achilles, the hands on the corpse laying, repeats the accusation against himself and describes with threatening words the gruesome death-sacrifices, with which he the fall of his friend atone will. Then is Patroclus bathed, with nine-year-old salve are his loins filled and his body on a costly bed laid. And Achilles with the Myrmidons begins anew him to bewail. Strange, but thoroughly the technique of Homer corresponding, is the way, how from these scenes the transition to the the book closing scene found is, in which Thetis from Hephaestus new weapons requests and this he them produces.

> But the whole night with the son of Peleus
> Lamented the Myrmidons for Patroclus.
> But to Hera said Zeus: So have you
> Finally Achilles stirred up, it looks,
> Hera, as if had you the Greeks from yourself
> All to the world brought! And Hera said:
> Dare a mortal mortals so much evil

> Do, who of the things so little knows:
> Wherefore shall I, more noble than the others
> Goddesses, wife and sister of the highest Zeus,
> Who you over all immortals rule,
> To the Trojans, who me furiously hated are,

Evil not do? So entertained themselves both.
But Thetis, the silver-footed, came
To the Hephaestus' imperishable, radiant
Brazen house, which he himself built.

Highly characteristic, this piece of entertainment between Zeus and his wife. Below on the one side the to destruction destined Trojans, on the other the lamenting Myrmidons; Hektor and Achilles to death near; behind them the terrible battle of the last day; before them new desperate combats, and on the eternally cheerful heights of Olympus make Zeus and Hera all this calamity, whose origin they themselves been are, to the subject of a short, joking teasing before falling asleep, which, as it seems, in the conversation-tone of the Homeric newest day held is. No attempt from Zeus' side, for Hektor to step in, no regret Hera's for Patroclus, no trace of oppressed mood: the both Olympian spouses look with on, what on the earthly stage precedes, as from the first rank of a theater, whose comedies and tragedies them equally amusing are. All that however forms only the introduction to the delightful picture-book, which we as illustration of the Achillean shield now receive, the by Hephaestus in a single night now to be accomplished work. Homer holds the struck tone fast, in order the visit of the Thetis at Hephaestus and wife to depict. We find not as usual with Homer Aphrodite, but Charis as the wife of the god. In the most cozy way take the spouses Thetis up, with reproaches, that she herself so long not had see let. Thetis breaks into tears out and tells circumstantially, how it her son gone be. "I have" — writes Schiller to Goethe (19th March 1799) — "in these days again the Homer before had and the visit of the Thetis at the Vulcan with infinite pleasure read. In the charming depiction of a house-visit, as one it every day experience can, in the description of a craftsman-like business is an infinite in matter and form contained, and the naive has the whole content of the divine."

The tone of the comedy steps fully into its rights. Thetis laments to the friendly couple her sufferings, with the right introduction, whether it any other goddess ever so badly gone be. There lie now Peleus, her old man, in bed and can himself no more move. And now had Achilles so terrible

trouble had. And Apollo had Patroclus struck dead. And Achilles' armor be stolen. And so further. Kindly comforts Hephaestus. Weapons at least want he for her son create, which all mortals in astonishment see would. Therewith limps he off, and the work goes off. Twenty bellows begin to blow, faster or slower, as them commanded is, bronze and tin, silver and gold are in crucibles melted, and with tongs and hammer begins the god at the anvil the work.

The great shield, the strong, the beautifully decorated, with triple shimmering white edge and silver baldric, from five superimposed discs consisting, is the first piece of the new armor, which Hephaestus produces.

One feels, how Homer his joy therein had, this magnificent shield to describe. Everything so right comfortably to enumerate, what thereon to see was. In the midst of luck and peaceful life-abundance displaces he us. The bloom of the existence of his time brings he like a bed of new, colorful spring-flowers us under the eyes. Such life and weaving of long-past people had the poet before eyes. Among them lived he. To them sang he his songs. From them received he applause. Their language was his. All that, what he until then in his comparisons only as torn fragments of his present produced, summarizes he and lets us their citizens in the own house see.

One has tried, this picture-decoration of the by Hephaestus for Homer worked shield in an artistic system to bring, as if had the shield existed or form the sample of a costly weapon-piece, as it to Homer's times worn was.

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One has after the ornamentation sought, in which these scenes inserted were. To me come these endeavors not otherwise before, than want one the architecture of the golden, brazen, radiant palaces find out, which the summit of the Olympus covered. Fairy-tale palaces are nothing, that architects to reconstruct might. Neither the gates of the paradise, nor the into the clouds reaching tower to Babel will they ever again discover. The shield of the Achilles, which a god in a single night forged, is a work, that not be what it be should, if earthly art it reproduce wanted: so little has this Olympian forge-work existed, as the golden maids of the Hephaestus, who him services did, as if they lived. Let we therefore the shield of the Achilles

as reality out of consideration. Only one to understand, is our task: the sequence of the scenes, which Homer us before the eyes brings.

First Picture.

The earth, the heaven and the sea, the sun and the moon and all stars, which the heaven crown, forms he. Then two beautiful cities. Wedding is in the one held, the brides are with burning torches and song from the chambers through the city led, youths dance, flutes and lyre-sound resounds, and in the doors, where he past-goes, stand the curious women.

Second Picture.

On the market is court-session. The compensation of a murdered is to be established. Two men dispute: the one claims, everything paid, the other, nothing received to have. The partisan people takes with shout part at the session. Heralds command silence. The elders sit themselves on the stone seats round in the circle. The negotiation begins.

Third Picture.

The other city is besieged. Those outside demand the half of all goods and threaten everything to devastate. Those inside go them in secret army-train toward, while women, elders and children the walls watch. Pallas Athena and Ares, both great in golden armors, lead them to the river, where the cattle of the besiegers to the trough led is, there camp they themselves. Two spies however have they out-sent, in order the drinking cattle to waylay. Now nears the herd, from two guileless shepherds driven, who themselves with flute-playing delight, the warriors storm from the ambush forth, murder the shepherds and drive the cattle off. Those however, who before the gates of the city lie, hear the noise, gallop on their steeds hither, and the battle at the river begins. Eris and other war-goddesses ignite the rage of the combatants, the ruinous Ker mostly, who in the bloody cloak in the midst of the throng of the wounded and dead with own hands tackles.

So vividly formed Hephaestus the scene, as if it were living people, who here fought and real dead, whose corpses they each other to withdraw sought.

We admire of the poet's ability, at each of these pictures so much dramatic content flow-let, that the movement of the events us seizes and, like with the through the Iliad scattered comparisons, we also here in expectation of that us displaced feel, what happen will. When Goethe says, that Homer the things itself appear let, other poets on the other hand only the impression described, which the things made, so deliver the pictures of the Achillean shield, which Homer with small word-stock here in us surface-let, as be it memories of us only dreamed experiences, a proof therefore. This gift is so extraordinary, that we the whole extent of the poetic power of Homer now at ourselves feel. Fully captured by that, what with the Greeks and Trojans itself develop would, see we us suddenly through these depictions into the interest at the nameless, by Hephaestus artistically hardly indicated city and at the fates of its inhabitants in-torn, as handled it itself about an event of historical significance.

Fourth Picture.

A fallow field plowed through for the third time. Rich, fertile land. Many plowing men guide the plows. Every time one has reached the end of the field with his team, a man stepping forward offers him a fresh draught, and so the plower turns them about, eager to reach the other end in the depth again.

> But behind, the soil grew dark,
> As a plowed ground appears dark,
> And yet it was fashioned of pure gold.
> Wonderful sight!

This picture is also important for the technique of the Homeric age, out of which Homer nevertheless shaped these descriptions of works of art. He does not represent landscapes and events extending in breadth in the

manner of a bas-relief, but rather conceives the field in such a way that it loses itself in the depth, so that the represented plowers also do not walk upon a flat field from left to right and vice versa with the plows, but come forward out of the depth or go back into it again. This indicates a perspective treatment, the technique of which becomes clear from the verses just translated.

Fifth Picture.

The harvest. A cornfield which reapers cut with sickles; handful upon handful the ears fall to the ground; gathering children carry them to the three binders of sheaves. Silently leaning upon his staff and with joy in his heart, the master oversees the work. Under the oak the meal is prepared by heralds, after a great bull has been sacrificed; the women, however, prepare the meal from white flour.

Sixth Picture.

A golden vineyard he then created,
Black the grapes, silver were the stakes
And the ditch around of blue steel
And of tin the fence. Only a single
Narrow path upon which the vintners walk,
When the time of the vintage comes. There carry

Maidens and youths with youthful thoughts
In woven baskets the sweet fruit
And, with string-playing in hand, a child
In the midst thereof sings longing songs,
Sings of the beautiful Linos, and they stamp
All at once the beat and shout aloud
And in the dance move their feet.

Seventh Picture.

A fold he created, with steep-horned
Cattle filled, of gold and tin the cattle.
With bellowing they leave the enclosure
Forth to the rushing river, where the reeds
Sway to and fro, and the herd follow
Golden shepherds, four in number and nine
Dogs with light gait. However, two lions
Plunge upon the bull who leads the herd.
Bellowing he is dragged away by them,
And the dogs and shepherds plunge after.
But the lions, tearing open the bull's side,
Lap up the entrails and the blood,
And the shepherds urge the dogs in vain,
Who, crowding close to them with barking,
Would rather flee than attempt to seize them.

This picture offers nothing new; the lions robbing the bull from the fold we often find chosen in the Iliad for comparison. How strikingly, however, do all those pictures differ from the one offered here. Everywhere else, where these and related scenes are depicted, the main accent lies upon the dramatic. What happens fills us with suspense. The spiritual movement of the attacked shepherds or hunters or of the leaping or frightened beast of prey forms the center of the narrative: let us notice how here it is only a matter of the sight of the event, which is presented to us in its various moments. Like the work of an artist. Light and dark cattle are distinguished, the horn winding steeply upward is pointed out, there are four shepherds and nine dogs; we imagine we have a painting before us such as Rubens and Snyders painted it.

The technically appropriate, which emerges everywhere where Homer places us (in the most delicate gradations of distance) in the midst of things or makes us from here or there only a contemplative spectator, has already been emphasized. It points to the poetic work of an experienced man, who

always knows what he wants and knows the means with which he acts upon the listener.

The eighth picture acts in its only few verses like a landscape sketch.

> A meadow fashioned the famous
> Limping artist, where in the forest-enclosed
> Valley of the mountains white sheep graze
> And where stalls and huts raise their roof.

As if we saw an etching by Rembrandt, or read one of the landscapes of Dutch or Venetian art described in a short notice.

The ninth and last picture the most beautiful: dancing youths and maidens, who weave a round dance. Of such vivid presence, and yet at the same time so much represented as a picture, that one believes one has before them at once the figures themselves and at the same time a painting by Raphael, which represents grace in movement most convincingly for us today. Silver wreaths adorn the girls, golden daggers hang down from the silver belts of the youths. Now they turn, now they go in rows against one another, and in a throng the people surround them.

Homer has in these nine pictures set an imperishable monument to the life of the day whose light surrounded him. That was the Ionian existence in which he grew up. We feel ourselves near to these things, as if the differences of the times vanished, for as long as men inhabit the earth, what Homer shows here will remain the bloom of human existence. Hephaestus himself was able to invent nothing more beautiful than the sight of human, gladdening work. To associate with men heightened the gods' own Olympic bliss. To mix in human fates is their enjoyment and their deed. Their thoughts are directed toward the human. With the mortals they suffer and rejoice.

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Round about the rim of the shield Hephaestus fashions the power of the all-encompassing Oceanus.

Now the remaining pieces of the armor come into turn, which shines more fiery than the fire itself. The helmet, fitting firmly to the temples, with the golden hair-ornament. Finally the greaves. And after all is accomplished, the limping artist takes his work to lay it down before Thetis.

And now the fairy-tale conclusion of the song:

> As from the summit of snow-covered Olympus
> Suddenly a hawk shoots into the depth,
> Bore the weapons Thetis away from Hephaestus.

Achilles' mother bears the burden away, like the little bird in the fairy tale with the millstone around its neck, which it lets fall down upon the evil stepmother, flies through the air. And the next song begins with Thetis laying the weapons down before Achilles. There is no miracle that a poet would not talk us into as the most natural thing in the world.

Nineteenth and Twentieth Songs

The nineteenth song can be taken together with the twentieth. It contains parts that sound dragging. I have the feeling as if from old times some things were missing, and others had been added to fill the gaps. Everywhere we see in Iliad and Odyssey the pressing forward to further events: in the nineteenth song not. Splendid is the scene, how the Myrmidons bewailing the corpse of Patroclus with Achilles, terrified by the brilliance of the weapons which Thetis brings in the morning, do not dare to look toward them, but Achilles becomes intoxicated by their sight. When he then calls the assembly of the Greeks, in order to present himself to them as it were newly as reconciled with Agamemnon, the narration becomes sluggish.

Neither Achilles' speech, nor Agamemnon's long-winded answer have a right pull, also what Odysseus brings forward is heavy and broad, and only then again does life come into the representation, when Briseis, led back to the camp of the Myrmidons, throws herself over the dead Patroclus and we

hear her lamenting his and her own fate. Of this scene there was already talk in the first part. Here we encounter the verse which Voss has translated so beautifully and which all the world knows: with Briseis Achilles' other serving women weep:

For Patroclus in appearance, yet each for her own misery.

Immediately thereafter, however, follows the hollow scene, how the Greek princes come to move Achilles to take food, and, as he refuses it, Athena at Hera's behest instills ambrosia and nectar into him. Then the empty representation, how he arms himself, and finally, when equipped he mounts the chariot, how the immortal steeds, suddenly gifted with speech, speak of his near approaching death and tell of the downfall of Patroclus. The succession of these scenes, which fill little more than four hundred verses, lacks the rich, blooming, surprising, irresistible quality of the Homeric diction. They string themselves together, but remain separate. It seems as if the editors of the Homeric text preserved for us had not brought together all the constituent parts of the original poem here. The fragmentariness of the text could also be the reason why the confrontation of Agamemnon and Achilles does not quite come to its advantage. With lawyerly cunning the king seeks to justify his previous behavior. Upon Zeus and fate he shoves his error, and with a broadly executed, but yet barrenly narrated historical example he supports the possibility of such aberrations. His speech completes the repulsive impression we have long had of him, while Achilles' way of rejecting the trivialities which distract him from the main thought governing him: wanting to fight, gives an unintended critique of the chatter pestering him. To my feeling, in both songs the genuine shines through only sometimes in individual fragments. The weeping of the steeds of Achilles in the seventeenth song moves me, their speaking in the nineteenth leaves me indifferent.

Let it also be noted that the nineteenth song contains only three comparisons, none among them of particular power, none also, what is more important, with its own inner turn. And yet Milton took from one of these pictures: that Achilles' shield shone "like the moon," the comparison

acting so mightily in his Paradise Lost: the shield of Lucifer striding in arms had shone, as the “full moon of evening rises over Fiesole.” Such rich gifts does Homer make even then, when he is poor.

That the negotiations between Agamemnon and Achilles were originally more dramatically moved is an assumption in which the twentieth song strengthens me. The description of the assembly of the gods setting in here finds in the deliberative meeting of the Greeks a parallel, the establishment of which lay entirely in the sense of Homer, whose endeavor and art to work with contrasts emerges too much everywhere for us not to notice it here as well. Strangely timeless, scorning earthly duration, appear the deeds and events of the Olympic existence. Events playing out over a long duration pass in dreamlike speed. Also in the scheduling, summoning, and holding of the parliament of gods this is found. Everything accomplished in a trice: summoning, debates, dissolution. For Greeks and Trojans already stand opposite each other ready for attack, when Zeus through Themis lets all the gods be summoned to Olympus. Even the streams appear, and of the nymphs who inhabit groves, springs, and “green-herbed” valleys, none is missing. Only Oceanus has remained away, but Poseidon comes. Emerging from the depth of the sea he sits with the others in the halls of the palace built by Hephaestus in the circle of the others and demands to know what Kronion’s intention is. The latter answers. His thoughts as far as Greeks and Trojans are concerned, Poseidon knows. He himself is minded to contemplate the battle calmly from the height of Olympus: they, the others, however, might, according as each is inclined, in the strife participate. For Achilles is too powerful for the Trojans and will, if one leaves him to himself, against the will of fate destroy the city.

Immediately the gods hasten in divided sentiments to the scene of war. Hera, Athena, Poseidon, Hermes, and Hephaestus into the Greek camp; Ares, Phoebus, Artemis, Leto, Scamander, and Aphrodite to the Trojans. Scarcely have the parties of the gods entered the armies, than their own indignation turning against one another surpasses the expressions of rage of the warring mortals, who yet stand opposite each other without combat. Divine shouting fills the plain from the heights of the city to the sea. From

Olympus down Zeus thunders. Poseidon, however, shakes the earth, so that the mountains and the walls of Ilion fall into tottering. Aidoneus, ruler of the underworld, leaps up from his throne in fear that Poseidon might let the depth of the earth become visible to men and immortals, before which even the gods shudder. Now Poseidon and Phoebus rise against each other, Ares against Pallas Athena, Hera against Artemis, Leto against Hermes, but against Hephaestus stands up Xanthos, the river-god, "whom men call Scamander." Not yet, however, to go at each other man against man, but for the first to fire up the mortals.

Apollo incites Aeneas against Achilles. Assuming the form of Lycaon, one of the younger sons of Priam, he addresses Aeneas.

> Where are all the threats, when with the heroes
> Of the Trojans sitting at wine you
> Presumed to attack Achilles?
> But Aeneas: why do you provoke me,
> Against the superior power to venture the strife?
> Has Achilles not driven me from Ida,
> When he robbed the grazing cattle there
> And destroyed Lyrnessus and Pedasus?
> Me Zeus rescued, because he the thighs
> And the knees for flight made efficient for me,
> For otherwise I would have succumbed then to Achilles and Athena,
> Who with victory shone around him.
> Against Achilles none comes on. Him always
> A god wards off the threatening calamity;

> But his own lance flies straight
> Forward, until it reaches and pierces the man.
> Were things equal: I should overcome him,
> Even if he were created entirely of bronze.

The passage shows with what cold-blooded deliberation the fighting heroes weigh the momentary state of things, so that where they flee, there may be no talk of cowardice.

A relationship of rank of another kind yet comes into consideration here. Apollo does not let Aeneas' reservations stand. Your mother Aphrodite, he argues further, is the daughter of Zeus, Thetis only that of the Old Man of the Sea! Forward then!

Hera, however, who has overheard the conversation, summons Poseidon and Athena. May whatever will lie before Achilles: today one must step in for him. But terror will seize him when he beholds Apollo beside Aeneas as his opponent.

Poseidon, however, true to his old peaceful character, persists in the opinion that gods must not confront gods. Waiting they wanted to sit down outside the turmoil and leave the battle to men. Only when Ares and Apollo sought to violate Achilles and to hinder him in battle, would they also break forth, and the other immortals then soon enough fleeing would make off to Olympus.

> Thus speaking the Dark-locked one strode
> To the high-heaped dam of Heracles,
> Which the Trojans and Pallas Athena
> Once threw up for him for protection before the monster,
> That pursued him onto the land.
> There sat Poseidon with the gods, spread
> Impenetrable mist around himself and them,
> But upon the peaks of Callicolone sat
> Phoebus and the city-destroyer Ares.
> And so they lingered on both sides,
> To obey Zeus who thundered for battle.
> But the plain filled itself and shone
> With the bronze armor of men and steeds,
> And from the steps of those approaching each other
> The earth groaned. And two heroes emerged,
> Aeneas and Achilles, in the middle
> Between the armies.

Notice the art with which Homer prepares the duel between these two. After the storming down of the gods and the upheaval of the elements, stillness arises. The two mortals again become the main persons upon whom our interest is directed.

I point also to this further. Poseidon, from the beginnings of the Iliad onward, has never stepped forward in action that carries him away, but always keeps within the limits of his calm character. As the brother of the reigning Zeus, treated by the latter with a peculiar mixture of consideration and ruthlessness, he knows how to maintain respect in his position as uncle of the younger Olympic generation. Accordingly, the restraint which he recommends to the excited gods for the time being arises not only from his specially constituted nature, but moreover from special circumstances which Homer has firmly before his eyes and which he carries through his poetry. In the Odyssey, Poseidon's sensitivity causes Odysseus to have to suffer so much upon the sea, but even here Zeus' brother contents himself finally with letting out his anger upon the unfortunate Phaeacians. Poseidon's characterization points to one of the high qualities which Homer shares with Goethe and Shakespeare: to these three it is impossible, where they depict an acting figure, even if it intervenes only occasionally, not to fashion it as an organic individual existing for itself. As nature works when she creates human beings.

In Aeneas' and Achilles' encounter, which now follows, no decision is reached. With speeches they first challenge each other. In broad genealogical exposition it is told by Aeneas how he and Hector stood in kinship. After the first spear-throw from both sides, Poseidon does not doubt Aeneas' succumbing. He lets darkness envelop Achilles' eyes and carries Aeneas far away through the air, where, still far from the turmoil of battle, the Cauconian auxiliary peoples are only just putting on their armor. Looking down upon him here, he punishes him with reproaches for having confronted Achilles, who is not only stronger than he, but also has significantly more Olympic protection.

Now Hector wants to attack Achilles. Apollo, however, holds him back, and he obeys. Suddenly, however, rage then nevertheless overpowers Hector when he sees his beloved youngest brother Polydorus collapse.

Before Polydorus, Hippodamas had already had to lose his life. Leaping from the chariot when he beheld Achilles, he sought to flee: but Achilles thrust the lance between his shoulders.

> And breathing out his spirit he bellowed aloud,
> Just as the bull, dragged away by youths
> To the altar of the Heliconian ruler,
> Groaning bellows, and Poseidon hears it gladly:
> So the soul left him as he bellowed.

Notice how Homer, with the thrice-following, identical “bellowed,” strengthens the impression of the bellowing. Only now does Achilles kill Polydorus.

> But he darted the lance at Polydorus,
> Priam’s son, the father’s youngest darling,
> Whom it was not yet allowed to fight in the battle;
> Yet, the swiftest in the race, he ventured,
> Almost still a child, into the foremost rows of the fighters,
> Until he lost his life. Him Achilles hit,
> As he flew past in the leap, the back:
> There where the gold clasps of the belt
> Cross and the two halves of the harness
> Lie doubly over one another, there penetrated
> To the navel over the bronze into the spine:
> And sinking down into the knees he cried out,
> Darkness veiled his eyes,
> And writhing he reached for the entrails.
> But when Hector perceived how his brother
> Lying upon the ground crooked himself, how he
> With the hands reached for the entrails,
> He became as if blind, no longer it held him
> And darting the sharp lance he stormed
> Upon Achilles like flying fire forward.

He however exulting aloud: forward man!
Whom I most desire to encounter,
Who murdered my friend! Now! We both
Go no longer out of each other’s way!

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Again, however, the gods mix into the fight. Athena blows upon Hector’s lance with a light breath of her mouth, so that it, returning powerless, falls before Hector’s own feet again. As Achilles with drawn sword now presses forward, Apollo surrounds Hector with protecting mist. Thrice Achilles stabs into the veiling cloud. But when he for the fourth time has raised the spear, he gives way, because he recognizes Apollo, to whom Hector owed his rescue. Turning against others, he annihilates whatever meets him upon his way, and the song concludes with a description of the terrible sight which he offers.

Two interwoven comparisons introduce this description.

As through the gorges of the forest parched
In the sun in the mountains heaven-born
Fire burns off the trunks down to the roots,
And the wind blowing from all sides
Carries forth the flying embers everywhere,
So that one flew with his spear everywhere
After those, like a demon, whom he killed,
And the black earth sucked up the blood.
Just as one leads two broad-browed bulls
About upon the well-smoothed threshing floor,
Yoked beside one another, who the grain’s
Bright kernels tread out of the ears,
And as the lowing oxen with broad hooves
Do light work: so Achilles’
Steeds trod down the corpses and the shields.
Wheels and axles dripped with blood: thus reaped
Fame the son of Peleus with bloody hands.

Through the peacefulness of the second comparison Homer heightens the terror of the last verse. Let us notice, however, this further. What Homer sets against one another in this comparison is the terrible but passing action of an individual, such as humanity has brought forth only once in a fantastic poetic dream, and the still, eternally constant ruling of nature and the eternally repeating life-work of real human beings. To these the poet turns, so that through the credible background which they furnish him, the monstrous figure of his art might be as it were authenticated. —

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Homer begins here, where the Iliad inclines toward the conclusion, to simplify the relations more and more and to make Achilles the sole bearer of the action. In the following battles, Achilles represents almost alone the Greeks. To the development of his character the other must serve. However much upon the hostile side Hector stands out beside him, the last songs of the Iliad nevertheless bring nothing further unfolding Hector's character. Hector goes out of the world without leaving behind an unsolved problem, while Achilles' spirit, up to the last words that he speaks, wrestles ever higher upward. To complete clarity, however, we do not arrive. Goethe, after he had considered Hamlet for his whole life, says in old age at last: over against everything that he himself had said about him: Hamlet's character remains problematic. Not otherwise do we judge about Achilles. He remains incomprehensible. He represents too much the spirit of Homer himself, as Hamlet too much that of Shakespeare: the bankruptcy of every magnificent human being over against the life of the day. —

The twentieth song also is only 500 verses strong. Together with the nineteenth it is again a prelude to the following, and together with this first a new step toward that upward, which is offered to us in the first of the three songs concluding the Iliad. Whose content surpasses all earlier songs in power and grandeur. For the sake of which Homer has composed. Which form the noblest keystone of his work.

Twenty-first Song

In the remarks upon the second song it was already expressed: a time must have been when no one yet knew Homer's Iliad, which was only in the process of originating. We do not know whether the poem was immediately at the beginning an event of significance.

Already the first songs of the Iliad could have acted like a sudden revelation, when upon the marketplace of "well-built Lemnos" perhaps the strife between Achilles and Agamemnon and the speeches of the other princes first sounded into the ear of the people and everyone said to himself, at any price he wanted to know how that would turn out; when from city to city thus in the songs of Homer something new emerged, something unheard of, enchanting, a hitherto unknown, new fruit, into which for the first time was bitten. Like a gift for children. We know with what staring admiration the first songs of the Messiah were received in Goethe's childhood years. How eagerly one read them and looked forward to what the following songs would bring. And yet only in Klopstock's old age did the conclusion of the Messiah come out, whose beginnings fell into the poet's student years. Possible that this also had been the course of things when the Nibelungen penetrated into the German people. In Dante it is proven how the Divina Commedia gradually grew further and only after his death did the work appear complete. With Faust we know how the poem, now lying idle, now taken up again, accompanied Goethe's life. And now even plastic and building art! Over a hundred years it lasted before the dome of St. Peter's church was completed after the builder's death. Twice twenty-five years was waited in Florence before the individual panels of the two bronze doors of Ghiberti were delivered by him, and then again it required years until the second door stood there finished.

A time can have been in Ionia where the people knew only some songs of the Iliad first. But also, a time where the Iliad had progressed only up to the twentieth song. And now I mean, it must in this epoch of hearing for the first time, at the time especially when it was lurked for what the twenty-first song would bring, everyone expected the decisive meeting of Hector and Achilles therein. And a certain wonder must have arisen when instead of

this decisive scene nevertheless again only events were brought forward which preceded it.

How necessary however are they for the poem!

In full flight toward the city the Trojans are engaged. Thus the twenty-first song begins:

> But when they came to the broad Scamandros,
> There where the stream offers a shallow place,
> There Achilles broke through the Trojans!
> The ones
> He pressed over the plain toward the city,
> Just where on the previous day Hector
> Drove the wildly fleeing Greeks before him.
> Hera however spread darkness
> Before the Trojans, and they could go no further.
> But the other half, hunted to the river,
> Where it shoots along deep in silver eddies,
> Threw itself in, so that it splashed and the waters
> Rose up to the rim of the steep bank.
> And, torn along further by the waves, they swam
> Striking about them and crying wildly in confusion.
> As swarms of locusts scared by fire,
> That suddenly rises up in a mighty flame,
> Fluttering forward turn to the river
> And falling upon the water seek rescue:
> So Achilles filled the floods of Xanthos
> With the turmoil of men and of horses. [1]

[1] Xanthos and Scamandros signify the same river. Grimm, Homer’s Iliad

I do not know whether Raphael knew Homer’s poems; a certain kinship however exists between Raphael’s last composition and this passage of the Iliad. I do not mean the Battle of Constantine, as Giulio Romano painted it

upon the wall in the Vatican after Raphael's death, but the large draft by Raphael's own hand, the washed pen drawing, which he threw down as a first thought and in which the freshness of all first phantasy-revelation dwells. The victorious Constantine has pressed the army of Maxentius to the river and breaks through them. In the background we see one half of the defeated enemy fleeing over the Milvian bridge toward Rome. Darkness, in the form of a broadly stretching mighty cloud, hangs over them. In the foreground the other part, which Maxentius himself commands, plunges into the Tiber, which here flows broadly toward us.

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Constantine, the lance darted for the throw in his hand, gallops with his men to the edge of the bank. Sinking horses and men fill the water, struggling with the waves under bellowing. We see Homer and Raphael under the dominion of similar play of phantasy bring forth similar pictures. Already in Raphael's representation of the Olympic life of the gods upon the vault of the garden hall of the Farnesina it was noticed how similar the greatest poet and the greatest painter have been in their views.

Up to this point Homer lets Achilles proceed humanly: what follows on the other hand is of a superhuman and inhuman kind.

> But Achilles, the divine, leaned the lance
> Against the thick bushes at the bank's edge
> And like a demon he leaped down, in the hands
> Nothing but a knife, and evil in his thoughts.
> Hither and thither he stabbed. Repulsive groaning
> Rose up from the blood-reddened water.
> And as before the shark's yawning maw
> Smaller fish to the shallow water's
> Secret bays in dense throngs flee,
> So the Trojans crowded to the swirling
> Stream's precipitous banks. But Achilles,
> When he had murdered his fill, tore a dozen
> Youths out of the waves alive,
> And as a hunter throws down a tethered fawn,

That knows not what is happening to it, so he bound
The hands of those backward with the thongs,
Which they wore upon the woven harnesses.
And to his people he threw the twelve,
Forth to the ships into the camp to lead them,
To sacrifice them there to the killed friend.
But then renewed lust for murder fills him again
And he perceived Priam's son Lycaon,
Who extricated himself from the floods. Him he had recently,
Quietly by night roaming through the Trojan field,
Intercepted, however much he might struggle.
Willow branches to cut for his chariot's
Seat, which he wanted newly to weave,
Lycaon had to his father's gardens

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At night from the city slunk. There gripped
A fist from the dark! Forth to Lemnos
He was led by ship. There the son of Jason
Bought him, from him a guest-friend bought him
(According to his birth an Imbrian, yet his name
Was Eetion) and he sent him further
To Arisbe. But Lycaon made off
On fleeing foot From there home again!
Ten and one day, With his friends,
Celebrated he there his return. But on the twelfth
He fell to Achilles anew into the hands
And now he must thither, whence no wanderer's
Foot returns.
But when him naked, without helmet and shield and lance,
— For all that had sunk into the depth —
Weary, with trembling, dripping limbs,
Achilles recognized again: Ha! What a miracle takes place!
Do the dead Trojans rise again?
Even as this one, whom I sold to Lemnos

And whom the deep sea there does not hold back?
Well, then I will the point of my spear
Now give you to taste! It will show itself,
Whether also the blooming earth gives you back.
So in thoughts hesitating stood Achilles.
But Lycaon, as if stunned, slunk nearer,
And Achilles raised the weighty spear.
But the youth slipped under its thrust
Slenderly away to the knees of the wild Achilles,
And the lance thirsting after human blood
Drove down past his back and stood in the ground.
And with the one hand the trembling spear,
With the other Achilles' knees clasping,
Priam's child entreated up to him:
As to the protecting deity I call, mercy!
Spare me! Of your bread I ate,
That day when you caught me. When you
Far from my father and my loved ones
Sold me into the distance, forth to Lemnos.
A hundred bulls I brought in to you then,
Thrice a hundred I will give you today!
Ah! Twelve days it is that I am back!
So much have I endured! And now gives
Fate anew me into your hands!
Zeus hates me, who again drove me to you!

Laothoë, my mother, is the old
Lelegian king's daughter, of Alteos,
Who in Pedasos' steep rock-fortress,
Where the Satnioeis in the depth rushes,
Rules his war-loving people: whose daughter
Became Priam's wife with many others,
She has borne me and my brother,
Who we both fell into your hands,

As foot-fighters: I and Polydorus,
Whom you have hewn down with the sword.
Now I come in turn. To your hands
I am forfeit! Only one last word yet:
Kill me not! It was not my mother
Who bore Hector, who your Patroclus,
Your friend, who was so mild and strong, killed.

Thus spoke Priam's youthfully shining son. Yet a pitiless voice he had to hear: Fool, nothing of ransom! No long speeches here! Before the death of Patroclus I spared the Trojans gladly, and as many as of them alive I caught, have I rather sold than killed. Now shall every one of you be vowed to death, who before Ilios falls into my hands! And the sons of Priam first of all! Die also you, dear boy. Why whimpering and lamenting? Also Patroclus had to die, who was more than you are. Look at me: am also I not a beautiful, strong man? Of good descent my father and a goddess my mother! After you die also I! Be it morning, midday or evening, come a lance or an arrow flying: also with me it comes to an end. Thus spoke Achilles, then the strength failed Lycaon. Achilles' lance he let go and kneeled there with spread arms. He however, swinging the sharp sword, hit him where neck and back join, so that it penetrated to the hilt, and overbalancing forward Lycaon lay there dying, and the black blood rushed forth and moistened the ground.

I have gone over to prose, because it lets the objective exactness of the narration emerge more. Homer is hard like the world-fate itself, which murders children and lets old people live. Therein only Shakespeare is equal to him. For in Dante there shines always still a light glimmer of compassionate feeling into the darkest things, for which he seeks indifferent words.

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In Homer life and death are mirrored as upon the smooth surface of a lake whose depth no one measures. What he tells, it is as if he had been present and had recorded the exchanged speeches while listening sharply. The inner course of the entreaties of Lycaon emerges more in a prosaic translation. We

perceive the anxious pressing-forth of thoughts, the accent of despair with which the youth, standing in the years where life seems most beautiful to us, seeks to postpone the end of his existence. Still in the last verse of his speech he would force Achilles to mercy. Of Patroclus' mildness he reminds him, as if Achilles could for the friend's sake now yet spare him, to whom precisely he is to be brought as a sacrifice. And at last then the submission into his fate. Silently he lets the hand sink from Achilles' lance, which he, as if it were a part of the soul of the inexorable opponent, had held clasped.

We know in advance that Achilles does not let himself be moved. We remember how Ajax and Odysseus as emissaries of Agamemnon fruitlessly tried to instill in Achilles the feeling of despair that filled themselves. The old comrade they wanted to win back, it made them anxious that he did not feel what they felt. Their words however slipped off his heart. Let us think further of the terrible accusation from the mouth of Patroclus: Achilles had no human parents, but the stone-cold mountain brought him forth out of itself. Let us remember the prayer: Zeus might vow Greeks and Trojans to equal destruction, so that he with Patroclus alone might annihilate Ilion. If the city however had fallen so, what then? To this question the nature of Achilles gives no answer. To bring destruction, to endure destruction, is his lot. A foreign power, which over against himself is pitiless, forces him to be pitiless like itself. The softness and goodness innate in him is deafened by a mad logic.

And yet it is, in the midst of these horrors, as if his fists wet with blood could at any moment reach again, pure as children's hands, into the strings of the silver lyre of Eetion, with which he, in that night when Ajax and Odysseus entered his tent, accompanied the song that he struck up lonely for his own consolation. Never does Homer let Achilles' figure distorted by rage be lost to its innate beauty. Achilles remains with the rage glowing in him the poor, forsaken human being, who awaits the approach of his hour of death and to whom life, even if it were preserved for him, would be able to offer nothing that was worthy of him.

From another side yet I consider the death of Lycaon.

Let us run through in our minds the final chapters of poetic compositions: the success of the work is conditioned upon the fact that in the parts with which it concludes, not a verse too many or too few be given. I have already expressed that I give the prize here to Hermann and Dorothea among modern works: taking newer and ancient poetry of all times together, however, the Odyssey stands highest as to technique. Homer has worked in it, as far as the change from acceleration and retardation is concerned, with even clearer mastery than in the last songs of the Iliad. In the Iliad, however, he is more powerful. An excess almost of inventive power in regard to the insertion of retarding elements asserts itself here, to which the Lycaon episode owes its origin. This poem within the poem, occupying the middle of the twenty-first song, stands in an important place. Lycaon's death strengthens the setting-in feeling of the downfall of Priam and the Priamidae. Must not everyone, when the twenty-first song has reached its end, feel the indispensability of the verses dedicated therein to Lycaon, perceive their beauty, feel their belonging to the whole? It was something to draw this twenty-first pearl also upon the string of the twenty pearls of the earlier songs.

Lycaon's suffering is a touching idyll. One believes to recognize the content of a song that would have preserved itself among the people, which Homer heard as a child when in the evening the Ionian maidens on the banks of the Scamandros, where Hector's burial mound towered up as a primeval monument, sang of the downfall of the Trojan royal children.

Thus has been sung of many. Of Joseph, whom his brothers sold. Of Armin's son, whom the kinsmen delivered to the Romans while yet unborn. Of the two who could not come together: the water was just so deep.

With Sarpedon, too, it was as if his longing for home dissolved into a ballad. Thus Achilles himself must have sung the deeds of his ancestors, or Demodocus, when he sang in Alcinous' royal hall of the heroes before Troy, or the Sirens, when they called out singing to the passing Odysseus that they wanted to betray to him the plans of the Greek princes. Such poems rose up like suddenly flickering fire. We read how the old Nordic singers,

excited by the sight of the images upon the tapestries, repeated the represented deeds in song, how at the deathbed of heroes the mourning breaks out in songs. A fullness of such poetry originated among the people can have echoed in Homer, as in Goethe's and Bürger's and Herder's spirit the German folksong found an echo.

Nevertheless, none of these Ionian folksongs could have reported things as the twenty-first song of the Iliad offers Lycaon's downfall. Had they really existed, Homer would have had to rework them altogether. For however much the verses of the twenty-first song telling Lycaon's fate seem to be dedicated to Lycaon alone, so much also is his figure only a part of the background of the larger painting whose main person is Achilles. Homer first has fashioned the episode of the death of Lycaon into an organic part of the entire Iliad. Lycaon's death is, like that of Patroclus, only one of the steps on which the poet leads us down to the downfall of Hector and Achilles. The first part of the Lycaonian fate had been formed, without Lycaon being named, by the downfall of Polydorus, who, almost still a boy, had been done away with by Achilles as a marksman indifferently shoots down a bird from its branch.

Like Polydorus, Lycaon clings with all the organs of his existence to life: yet he must follow his brother. Thus Homer introduces the gradual downfall of the family of Priam. What does not play out before our eyes is foretold in forebodings and prophecies, as if it had happened. Let us notice at the same time how this annihilation, slowly consuming all fellow-actors, creeps on quite differently in the Nibelungen. Let it also be expressed here that, while the eventual downfall of Ilion and its great families gradually impresses itself upon us as something self-evident, of the later fates neither of the collective Greeks nor of individual families participating in the expedition is there ever mention in the Iliad. A happy, glorious, booty-laden homeward journey seems—those who fall before Troy excepted—in the Iliad still to be the outcome of the undertaking.

And yet one last word about Lycaon.

Lycaon is sacrificed to Achilles' madness turning toward a new goal. This not-ceasing, but rather strengthening of the Achillean frenzy is the point from which the last four songs of the Iliad have been constructed. Not thought of with Achilles' spiritual existence as center, the poem would fall asunder. We do not see Achilles freed after his re-entry into the battle, but thrust into new, even harder bondage. At the end of the twenty-fourth song first does he become completely free. The visible striving of all parts of the Iliad toward this goal lets the question, how far Homer used existing material, appear as just as indifferent as in the case of Goethe's Faust and Clavigo or Götz von Berlichingen, with which we indeed know the material. The work of the poets has made the matter into their complete property. Nowhere a trace of the mere reporting of a street-singer, from which the French poets of the old time did not emerge and to which Wolfram von Eschenbach also succumbed, while the poet of the Nibelungen freed himself from it.

How much the poet was concerned only with Achilles in Lycaon's episode is shown by the sequel of things. After the death of the unfortunate royal child, Achilles' rage is not yet exhausted. Seizing the corpse by the foot, he hurls Lycaon into the river. There he may lie among the fish. Carelessly they shall drink the blood from his wounds. Not shall his mother bewail him. Into the wide lap of the sea the Scamandros shall whirl his corpse away. Many a fish there shall find a fat morsel on him. All shall die! Not shall the Scamandros rescue the Trojans, to whom they sacrificed so many bulls and horses. By a heavy death shall all atone for the death of Patroclus. Not only for that of Patroclus, however, but for that of all Greeks who have fallen. Let us notice the increasing nature of these thoughts. Step by step Homer develops Achilles in the course of his poetry. The bravest, most beautiful, most spirited of all Greeks is capable of thinking only the one thing: annihilation. What lives shall be destroyed! All goodness, all that is glorious is in Achilles only the filling of time, as long as the feeling leaves him that he is called to destroy everything.

The river-god Scamandros perceives the criminal nature of this excess. Similar to Poseidon, he is inclined to roll his waves further in benevolent

stillness. Enormous agitations seize him, however, when anger over the "too much" comes over him. Asteropaeus, the grandson of the river-god Axios, is now cast to the shore by Scamandros, in whose floods he like other Trojan army leaders had sought rescue, to confront Achilles. Immediately Lycaon is done with for the poet, and the newly appearing Asteropaeus claims his and our interest. His conversation with Achilles, their combat with details and Asteropaeus' death are told with the quiet lack of haste that we know.

The duel is introduced by Achilles' question to Asteropaeus: who he indeed is, and whence he comes, that he confronts him, him, "whom only the sons of the unfortunate encounter." Asteropaeus boasts of his descent: his father's father was the god of the broadly flowing Axios.

Asteropaeus has nothing from this. Achilles strikes him down. Only then does he answer Asteropaeus' self-glorification. Over against this dead man, Achilles boasts for the first time in the Iliad of his descent. His own father's father was a son of Zeus! Peleus was Aeacus' son, but whose father was Zeus! Now we learn why Thetis had been forced by Zeus to give herself to Peleus as wife, why the Olympic gods appeared at his wedding and gave him gifts. Again, Homer's way of occasionally weaving in main matters. It was just a matter of the division of the gods into older and younger and the fact that Thetis belonged to the older, nobler generation. Zeus Kronion founded the rule of the younger Olympians. His endeavor was to quietly humiliate the gods of the older generation. One of the applied means had consisted in forcing Thetis, belonging to the Titanic ancient nobility, to marry his grandson. No mere love affair, but a recognized marriage was to unite them. Hence Thetis' aversion to this marriage, hence the yielding of Zeus, well aware of a debt, toward her wishes, and, when she asked for weapons, the obliging politeness of Hephaestus. Hence the internally untenable position of Achilles, who thought himself nobler than the Olympians. Only accidentally, according to his feeling, had a few mortal names gotten into his family tree. Through the mother he stood in old nobility even above the Olympians, through the great-grandfather equal to them: and he, Achilles, whose actual residence should have been one of the

palaces of the gods, condemned to associate with the Greek kings as their equal!

From the fact that Achilles never before boasts of his highest family connections in the Iliad, we see the extent of his self-feeling. Of this he spoke only with himself. Those were the "ancestors" whom he sang lonely, when the messengers of Agamemnon came to him. What could it matter to him that his mortal fellow-princes placed him more or less high? When Agamemnon offered him one of his daughters, he had it mockingly answered that the king might seek out a higher-born son-in-law. One who *was βασιλεύτερος*.

To be sure, many Greek and Trojan ruling families boasted of the royal blood in their veins. Even the Julians in Rome of the descent from Venus (through Julus, who was Anchises' grandson). What however did that signify over against the direct great-grandfatherhood of Zeus? Achilles speaks only with himself! Asteropaeus' boasting words he had left without reply. Now however, as his opponent no longer hears him, his pride breaks the dams. He is no longer master of himself in the feeling of his descent. Homer prepares us through this excess for what Hector has now to suffer, and excuses Achilles at the same time.

Earlier it has already been set forth why these god-kinship relations seem to be the source from which Homer's phantasy drew in the conception of the Iliad. The intrigues of an older dispossessed line over against a younger, currently reigning one (somewhat like Bourbons and Orléans) were what mostly excited the soul of the poet. Thus also the poet of the Nibelungen proceeded from the fact that Siegfried and Brunhild, both of highest descent, fell into fate-destroying dependence on earthly powers of lower birth. Until these superterrestrial things then however shaped themselves into the actual content of the Nibelungen, that is, the "Revenge of Kriemhild," was a long way. I draw here also upon Goethe's Wilhelm Meister. The actual content of the novel is — as Emerson first purely expressed — the entry of a commoner into the aristocracy to which he belonged according to his spiritual significance. This contrast lay deeper in

Goethe's thoughts than with us today, because such things touch the world less today.

Achilles' soliloquy before the corpse of Asteropaeus sounds magnificent:

> Lie now there. To fight with the children of Kronion
> Is hard, when one descends from lower gods.
> For a river-god was your father only,
> But great Zeus himself is my ancestor!
> For my father, the Myrmidon ruler,
> Was the son of Aeacus, whose father was Zeus!

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> As far as Zeus is above the streams in power,
> Are his children above the children of the streams.
> May your stream stand by you: with Kronion
> No one will want to measure himself in battle!
> Not the Acheloios will be equal to him,
> Not the monstrous flood of Okeanos,
> From whom all the rivers and seas flow out
> And the springs and wells, as far as the world is:
> Even Okeanos fears the lightning of Zeus
> And the terrible thunder that echoes after him.

These verses have something void of content, yet in sound at the same time powerful like the rolling thunder itself. As Achilles takes the ocean and all waters of the earth together, I mean to hear the thunder that goes over the sea. In the recitation of the Iliad these verses must have received a special emphasis. Again I say to myself that their significance for Achilles emerges in full scope only when we feel that within the Iliad, they bring something new at this place, so that the remaining content of the poem up to the twenty-first song forms a necessary contrast to them. That verse of the first song only now receives its full content, in which Achilles is called "the divine" over against Agamemnon.

After the death of Asteropaeus, Achilles begins with the extermination of the Paeonian warriors whom Asteropaeus commanded. Only twelve days

since have they joined the Trojan army. Seven of them, whom Homer cites by name, Achilles has slain, when the river-god Scamandros, assuming human form, commands him a halt from out of the floods. Even if the gods stood now at his side, he calls to him, well then he should rage upon the dry field against the Trojans, but not overload the lovely floods of his river with corpses. No longer could he roll his waves further into the holy sea. Achilles replies that he will be at his will, and storms against the Trojans outside of the river: not sooner would he rest than until Hector and Troy or he himself were annihilated.

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There Scamandros calls Apollo to aid. Not mindful are you, Phoebus, of the commands of your father, who commanded you to protect the Trojans until evening!

Achilles turns now again against the river. Down the steep bank he leaps into the midst. Scamandros, bellowing like a bull, hurls upward-flooding the corpses to the shore. The Trojans still swimming living in him he hides in covered bays. Whirling Achilles about with his turbid waves, he tears the ground away from under his feet. Achilles pulls a “well-grown, tall elm” down with the roots, so that the steep bank tears asunder and the thick-leaved branches hold back the water. The tree becomes a bridge for him. He swings himself up from the depth. He flees over the field. Scamandros in black waves pursues him. Always Achilles is ahead of him by the distance of a spear-throw, fleeting like the eagle. The stream however hunts after him.

Homer’s narration is here highly vivid. I gave only the briefest extract of his verses. Events of a fairy-tale kind he reports so bodily that we experience them with him. Again, the connection peculiar to him of quiet report with exciting deeds emerges. As very often on such occasions, he uses words that are only still found in his work. In the decisive moment he pauses to explain Achilles’ dangerous situation by a comparison taken from the simplest human labor:

> Just as a man creates a clear path for the water,
> That flows down in ditches onto the crops:

With the spade in hands he throws the hindering
Rubble out of the conduit upward: there comes the flood
Suddenly down and mud and stones it pushes
Forward and has reached the depth sooner
Than he who has cleared the ways for it.
So the forward-shooting wave of the stream reached
Always Achilles, even if he shot along lightning-fast,
For the gods are swifter than human beings.

With what certainty Homer directs our thoughts away from everything happening to a worker without name, who, making the way into the valley free for the "dark spring," while he believes to direct it, is overpowered by its suddenly storming-forward natural force. Where? When? What intensive mastery over our phantasy!

Far richer in content than the poet indicates the things here, they appear to us, and we attend their course. Always where nature suddenly breaks ways for itself, the observing human being is taken in. Whoever looked on at such a thing will gladly tell of it. To Homer the gentle or wild natural force stands before his eyes as a something whose special sphere of power he wonders at. The battle of the elements he observes with reverence. One could say one-sidedly that his poetry had only the purpose of mightily glorifying the untamed natural forces over gods and men, only by representing them. Thus also Goethe. I remind of "Mahomet's Song," where the plunging water, without being personified, becomes something personal, as if for such powers the transition into human form were not needed to be filled with own feelings for which the human heart forms the measure.

Achilles, who deems himself lost, calls upon Zeus. By his mother he had been deceived! Under the walls of the city, she had said, he would succumb to Apollo's arrows. Better if instead of the Scamandros Hector had killed him, because a brave man would then have succumbed to a brave one. And now I am to die, he calls, as a poor boy perishes who herds the pigs and who in winter drowns in the ditch that he wants to wade through?

When Achilles speaks with Zeus, there lies solemn familiarity in his words. It struck us in the prayer with which he turned to Zeus at the departure of Patroclus, reminding him of earlier prayers that found hearing. He negotiates with Kronion like one vowed to death who expresses a last wish.

Zeus is not able to intervene. Scamandros belongs to the sphere of power of Okeanos, the god of the great waters which flow around the world, while Poseidon rules only the sea enclosed by Okeanos. Homer keeps the regions of both deities apart. The Olympians are the new dynasty, beside which the older continues in part undisturbed.

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Hardly has Achilles ended, when Poseidon and Athena in the form of men stand beside him. Scamandros will soon calm himself, they say. Achilles should not rest until he has driven the Trojans into the city and killed Hector. Courage returns to Achilles. Though Scamandros may overflow the plain with his floods, in which weapons and corpses swim: Achilles, standing in them up to the knees, withstands their onset. There Scamandros calls the Simoeis to aid: “Brother, this man we must tame, or Troy is lost! Summon all the waters to flow to you, all springs, all torrents call down from the mountains, let trunks and rocks thunder down, that we may become master of this human who rages like a god. Neither his strength nor his weapons shall avail him! Deep in the mud he shall lie! Stones I will roll upon him, sand and shells a thousandfold wash over him! In vain will the Greeks seek for his bones! That shall be his burial mound, and no other shall the Greeks heap up for him!”

And in monstrous eddies mixing water and blood and dead and weapons into one another, Scamandros storms upon Achilles, whom the purple wave, as if animated by the anger of the god, packs, overflows and overpowers. That Hera sees and cries aloud for her son Hephaestus. With fire shall Hephaestus go down, then she will ask the West and the South wind to excite a heavy storm from the sea, until the flaming glow singes the heads of the Trojans themselves and melts the weapons off their bodies. You however, she calls out commanding, set the wooded banks of the

Scamandros in flames and let the water go out in fire. And no sooner hold off, may he now threaten or flatter, than until I myself with the thunder of my voice command you to stop!

Hephaestus lets the fire-glows obedient to him step into action. The field burns, the corpses burn. The plain parches, the waters dry up. The elms at the river, the broom and the willows, the lotus and the calamus at the bank flame up. The fish flounder, and the river-god himself gets hot in spirit. He begins to strike milder notes. May Achilles kill the Trojans, he calls, it concerns him no more.

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Already, however, the waters of the stream begin to boil, casting bubbles aloft and seething like fat being rendered in a cauldron. The waves of the Scamandros refuse to move forward. Now he calls upon Hera in supplication. Whether other gods had not also done their part for the Trojans: why he alone should atone for all? An oath he would take, henceforth to concern himself no more with Ilion, even if the city should flare up in flames. Only then does Hera give the command to Hephaestus to cease, and the waters of the Scamandros flow back into their banks.

Let us observe in these intensifying visions how Homer possesses the gift of producing effects of the highest order through contrasts contained within a single short sentence. While the gradual igniting of all things is presented to us in a sensory crescendo, he employs a simple means to make this incredibly fairytale-like condition appear natural and comprehensible. At the point where it is described how, under the fiery breath of Hephaestus, the waters flooding the plain suddenly dry up, he brings the following comparison: “As when the North wind dries freshly flooded seeds in an instant, and he who planted them blesses it.” An image that stands in scant connection with the sudden parching that Hephaestus sets to work, but which most naturally makes the husbandman, satisfied with the change in weather, the measure of supernatural events.

All that, however, was only the prelude.

We saw how the gods and goddesses had once again been permitted participation in the battle, and they would long since have come to blows among themselves had the consideration not restrained them that it was more advisable for the time being to wait and see what happened among the mortals. Like enormous birds of prey shrouded in mist, the Olympians sat around the battlefield and observed. At last, for them too, the moment has come. Heaven and earth crash, and from the peak of Olympus Kronion sees smilingly how they, measuring each other with their eyes for a while longer, pass to the attack.

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Ares, whose drawn spear the lightnings of Zeus would not be able to shatter, flings himself, uttering insults of a low sort, upon Athena. She, drawing back, seizes a mighty black stone and strikes the god in such a way that he falls down full length. Seven acres of land he covers. With laughter she mocks him. When Ares, sighing heavily, comes to himself again, Aphrodite holds his hands comfortingly grasped; Hera, however, who will not suffer that both escape thus, once again sets Athena upon them. Now it is Aphrodite's turn, who receives a blow against the breast from the raging one, so that she, losing her breath, sinks to the ground beside Ares.

Thereupon Poseidon also loses his calm and turns against Apollo. But even now the brother of Zeus masters the feeling of his dignity. Nobly he leaves it to Apollo, as the younger, to begin the battle, for to himself, who is older and more experienced, that would not befit. He would, however, remind Apollo of how ill they both had once been treated by these same Trojans for whom Apollo now wished to strive with him. In that Poseidon presents the experience of past times in the manner of Nestor, as it were with many details, he gives, according to his nature, a broadly motivated declaration of war, raises well-founded serious reproaches against his nephew on account of his inconsistency, and challenges him now to proceed.

Apollo, however, makes clear to his uncle how foolish a duel for both would be under these circumstances. Evident nonsense it would be if Poseidon and Apollo fought one another on account of this wretched, frail

human rabble, these transient mortals who, if they had the mind, might annihilate one another. Therewith he wishes to go out of Poseidon's way, but his sister Artemis holds him fast with mocking words. A coward, a vain boaster he was. Yet Apollo makes his way quietly off.

Hera, however, has heard Artemis' words. An impudent bitch she was, who should let it suffice her to fight with the beasts of the forest, but not against gods.

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With the one hand she packs both of Artemis' hands together, with the other she strikes the quiver from her shoulder, tears out a bundle of arrows, and laughing, belabors her countenance with them. Howling, Artemis takes to flight. Now her mother, Leto, also comes to it. Hermes, although belonging to the opposing party, makes way for her; his intention was not, he explains to her politely, to get into strife with the consorts of Zeus; he steps back, and Leto may boast of having defeated him without a fight. The standpoint of the man of business. Leto gathers up arrows and quiver, which lie about in the dust, and storms up to Olympus after Artemis, who had hurried ahead of her.

On Zeus' lap sat the so poorly treated Artemis, weeping. "Dewily trembling her radiant garment flows down her limbs," Stolberg translates. Such situations are just right for Zeus. With a friendly smile he lets himself be told what indeed happened; which of the inhabitants of heaven had handled her so badly.

> And the goddess of the forest said: Little Father,
> Your wife, Hera, has beaten me,
> Who is to blame for all the quarreling among us.

With this the divine episode breaks off. It was introduced by the smiling watching of Zeus, who, when he notices that the Olympians are seriously getting into a heat, lets the gang vent their rage like a good-natured nursery maid and, without taking sides, gathers them around him afterward as if nothing had occurred. So happily has Homer hit the right tone that his audience surely accompanied the strife of the heavenly gentry, degenerating

into a scuffle, with much louder applause than it had done earlier, where the gods still preserve a remnant of dignity which here entirely vanishes. But one should compare the pieces in which Aristophanes and (centuries later) Lucian mock the gods, to become at the same time aware with what good nature and still-remaining respect Homer pours out his mockery over the Olympic family, where father, mother, uncle, aunt, and sons and daughters first get into each other's hair amidst thunder and lightning and then sit together again somewhat exhausted but comfortably.

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The scenes strike us with almost experienced truth to nature. I did not dare to translate these verses of our song. However one set about it, one would suffer shipwreck. Into the silly tone of Blumauer's Aeneid these jests surely cannot be dragged down. Voss, however, seeks too much to maintain classical decorum. Byron perhaps would have brought the scene into sufficient English and set the right accents for modern readers. It depends upon the fact that Homer's immortals excite laughter without being ridiculous. As soon as we remember the mountainous, towering, enormous body size of the gods, which nonetheless is to be measured by a human scale, the common-human comparison loses its pettiness and the genre-like quality disappears. Monumental grace is poured over these scenes. Personalities filled with power may, in a position so highly exalted above time and transience, also once give themselves over to what we call madness in human beings. Homer always keeps us in hand. "Zeus' clouded brow," with which he finally stands there after the completed outbreak of these passions among his own, indicates that the storm in his judgment is now over and the time of serious human government has again entered.

I do not here merely renew considerations that appeared already exhausted at the first song. The nature of the gods was compared by me there with courtly conditions of the 18th century. This time this comparison would no longer apply. The nature of the family of Zeus has not changed to its advantage in the time lying between the first and twenty-first song. The question could be raised whether it had perhaps mattered more to the poet to depict in the Iliad the growing passionate brutality of divine characters invented by him, rather than the perishing of noble human beings who

repeatedly seek to escape destruction and are repeatedly thrust back in by the gods.

More contemptuously could not be spoken than by Apollo to Poseidon. Poseidon, who in what he does shows a reflection of human sympathy, preserves a certain bourgeois concept of decency and fairness, is pointed out by Apollo, shamelessly according to our feeling, that humans were truly no object for which gods should fight with one another: the same disposition from out of which, at the conclusion of the first song, all the Olympians seat themselves for supper and conclude their differences of opinion in cheerfulness. I deem it necessary to take the fundamental views of Homer repeatedly into consideration. For here lies the problematic element of his poetry. How quite different are the fellow-actors in the Nibelungen smiths of their own fate.

Magnificently the poet now turns back to the gloomy earthly fates and events which, during this superterrestrial thunderstorm, continued to play out in full sunshine under the walls of Troy. Let us notice the formulation of the verses forming the transition:

> Thus spoke they together in heaven above.
> Away to Ilios turned Apollon,
> To protect the walls of the city from the Greeks.
> To Olympos went the remaining gods.
> Seated themselves, angry or joyful in victory,
> Around the father, who sat there of serious countenance.
> But Achilleus murdered on below.

A simple sequence of facts. Every verse containing an image, and this filling him entirely.

Homer shifts the scene to Ilios. From the height Priam sees the Trojans, chased toward the city, coming nearer. Weeping he comes down and commands the gates to be opened wide, but to take care also that they are closed again as soon as the army is inside. Apollo goes to meet the fugitives who, covered in dust, hurry near with parched throats. Enveloped in mist,

standing by the beech tree at the Scaean gate, he instills in the crowding-in Agenor, the son of Antenor, the thought to stand fast here against Achilles.

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The family of Agenor plays its role in the Iliad. We know Homer's method regarding families. In various songs he gives details that fix themselves in our memory and from which a whole joins together. [1]

[1] Cf. above p. 251, p. 261.

Agenor's father appears first in the third song. Agenor's mother Theano at the beginning of the fifth. When the Trojan women implore from Athena the death of Diomedes, Theano is the priestess leading the prayers. Of her it was already told in the fifth, which at this place is without any significance: that she reared the son of her husband by another woman with her own sons in her house, as if he belonged to these. In the eleventh song (p. 256) the history of one of her genuine sons is presented in detail. Theano's father, a Thracian king, had reared his grandson Iphidamas, kept him with him, and wedded him to one of his daughters. When Troy was in need of aid, the king sent Iphidamas and twelve ships thither. He falls by Agamemnon's hand. His downfall is reported, however, in such a way that not Agamemnon, who slays him, is the main person in this event, but Iphidamas himself. All seven sons of Antenor we thus gradually get to know in various songs. They fight and suffer for their fatherland. Agenor, the most excellent among them, always emerges only in brief moments. At last he then places himself over against Achilles.

When Agenor at the Scaean beech — how much does this familiar tree of ours experience! — awaits the approach of Achilles, Homer, to show what goes on in Agenor's soul, once again enters into the soliloquy beginning with "Woe is me!", in which he lets noble natures take counsel with themselves whether to flee or to stand fast. Twice already we encountered this form; I remind of Odysseus, for whose characterization this inner questioning and answering is the main passage in the Iliad. Nowhere else does he step out so heroically.

He makes the highest demands upon himself, while Menelaus dares not be quite open with himself. Agenor is differently constituted than these two hard Greeks — innocent joy of life mingles with courageous thoughts in him. Agenor becomes, through the share we take in his inner labor, one of the more significant figures of the poem. Comparing these three monologues of Homeric poetry among themselves, I believe to recognize that it must be the same poet who repeats this form. Homer is rich in technical devices to illuminate the characters from whose activities the composition of the Iliad has been woven together. Brave as Agenor is, so little of the aggressive lies in his nature. He would not, had a Greek stolen a Trojan princely daughter, have moved across the sea to win her back. It is important to observe how this trait recurs in the Iliad.

> Sadly he began to speak with himself:
> Woe is me! If I now flee like the others,
> He packs me nonetheless and strikes my head off.
> But how? If I ran across the plain
> And reached the wooded ravines of Ida
> And late in the evening, washing the sweat
> From my limbs there at the river, unhurt
> Into the city stole? — But to what end
> Do I deceive my thoughts with such things?
> If he sees me from here hurrying across the plain,
> He runs after me like the wind and overtakes me! —
> But does not the bronze penetrate his flesh too?
> Has he more than one life to lose?
> Is he not mortal as we other men?
> And his heart urges him to await Achilles.
> As from the thicket a leopardess comes out
> And withstands the hunter: though it be wounded,
> Though it feel the arrow already between the ribs,
> Though the hunter draw back for the last thrust:
> Courageously the animal holds its ground, until bleeding out
> It sinks down and death overcomes it.
> So stood the divine son of Antenor

Without thoughts of flight over against Achilles.

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Agenor does the first cast, but Achilles' armor forged by Hephaestus lets the point of the spear glide off, and Agenor would have been lost had Apollo not enveloped him in a cloud and, fleeing across the plain himself in Agenor's form, lured Achilles after him.

Agenor's soliloquy presents the young Trojan in a circle of beautiful images. We see him fleeing into the woods of the mountains, throwing away the weapons and plunging into the cool waters there. We see him stealing to the city through the darkness. Added to this the image of the courageous leopard. In none of the earlier songs, filled with hunting scenes, is the tenacity of a heroically standing animal described in such intensification. Agenor increases the effect of the concluding twenty-first song by refreshing the interest. Of the family of Antenor there is no further mention in the Iliad.

Moreover, there lies in Agenor nothing that lets us ask after his further development. Homer's way of letting heroes thus disappear from the ranks of the fellow-actors is much more striking in other figures. We experienced in the twentieth song the duel between Aeneas and Achilles, in which it went similarly as here. Aeneas strikes Achilles' shield, but through the work of Hephaestus the point of his spear is unable to penetrate; Poseidon carries Aeneas away to save him, and with that we have encountered him in the Iliad for the last time. This battle dissolving into nothing is much more detailed and richly depicted than that with Agenor; nevertheless, it excites our participation at most so far that we indeed would like to know what became of Aeneas later, but soon forget him. Aeneas vanishes from the poem without leaving a gap. He does not speak with himself in a decisive moment. He does not belong to the more intimately involved fellow-actors. Agenor steps nearer to us in his monologue.

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Twenty-second Book

Finally, Hector is named again. While Achilles pursues Apollo, who has assumed the form of Agenor, the retreat of the Trojans into the city is completed. The warriors lean their shields against the walls inside and wipe away the sweat. Only Hector remains before the gate to await Achilles, who, lured by Apollo to the banks of the Scamander where the god then mockingly revealed himself, flies back toward Troy. Now we hear how Priam from atop the wall implores Hector to save himself. What the King and Hecuba and Hector say here has something dry about it. Hector does not answer his parents at all, but only takes counsel with himself. For the fourth time we find the self-reflections beginning with the cry “Woe is me!” concerning flight or standing firm. [1]

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[1] For the beginning of this canto, what was said above on p. 147 f. regarding the beginning of the seventh canto should be compared.

Homer remains true to himself in the depiction of thoughts and feelings among Greeks and Trojans when resolutions of the highest order are to be made. With the Greeks, even when they deliberate coolly, passion tips the scales; with the Trojans, even when they fall into emotion, political considerations demand their right. The Trojans are, as has already been mentioned, constitutionally trained citizens; the Greeks, of a deeper and freer disposition, allow themselves to be carried away. Let us remember how Agamemnon calculated that even if the Greeks longed ever so much for home, if one made earnest with the departure, they would want to stay. Purely human, great instincts tip the scales. The Trojans, however, ask what the general advantage commands. The Trojan and the Greek public differ. Menelaus, when he weighed staying or retreating by the corpse of Patroclus, took into account the mood of the army; Hector considers that of the entire Trojan population. Priam, instead of persuading Hector into the city with heart-moving reflections, presents to his eyes how it will fare for him, the King, and the royal family, should he fall.

Hector seeks to become clear on what the moment demands. In general, Hector is pessimistic in disposition, in particular, optimistic. The average standpoint of many an experienced man in a high position. Historical conviction that all is lost anyway, and businesslike energy in momentary assertion of the point where one stands, are mixed in Hector from the beginning; Achilles has no touch of this nature. I refer back to how, in the dispute between Polydamas and Hector as to whether the Trojans, after Achilles' reappearance on the battlefield, should repeat the attack on the Greeks or at least hold their ground against them, or rather withdraw immediately into the city, Hector commanded the continuation of the fight not out of lust for battle, but out of practical considerations; now, after the fact, he realized that Polydamas had been right. To actually acknowledge this, however, by coming into the city himself, seemed unendurable to him. Polydamas was his subordinate. The appearance of the supreme commander within the gates would be too great a concession. Authority would suffer. Every Trojan would then place himself on an equal footing with him, yes, even the Trojan women would be permitted to mock him. Better, therefore, to hold out, to await Achilles, and to let fortune decide.

Now another thought comes to Hector. He considers an arrangement with Achilles possible. He would lean his spear against the wall, take off shield and helmet, and go toward Achilles for friendly negotiation. Immediately his business-like imagination creates the basis of their negotiation. First paragraph: Helen with the carried-off treasures is delivered up. This was a mighty resolution. In Helen's abduction, her riches were considered in a completely different light than we assume today. The beautiful woman was only the most precious piece of a mass of highly valuable objects, which to have brought into the country was no shame for Paris. Neither Hector nor Priam favored the party of those in Troy who were for restitution from the beginning, nor did they treat—as we saw above—Helen poorly.

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Paragraph two: whatever treasures Troy contains within itself shall be determined on the basis of holy oaths, and the Greeks receive half. This was hard, but more advantageous than conquest and plundering. Hector still

believes the ruin of the city to be avoidable and hopes to come through with a fifty percent loss.

He recognizes the folly of this calculation immediately, however. Achilles will not engage in quiet discussions. And so again the conclusion that higher powers must decide. With Zeus, Hector stood well as an eager offerer of sacrifices and had thereby, as was acknowledged even on Olympus itself, acquired certain claims. Now, however, something occurs that Hector did not foresee. Achilles has reached him. He stands before him. A sudden shudder runs through Hector, and he runs away.

At this point, according to my feeling, the twenty-second canto begins in its true form. It seems as if what we have before us up to this point consists only of fragments of the original poem, which were strung together during the collection of the texts. This is the reason why the situations presenting themselves have been so little exploited. Even the way Hector is introduced at the front with two short verses contradicts Homer's manner. How full of life until the end of the twenty-first canto the generality of the situation had been made by the poet into the background of the scenes playing out; the flight of the Trojans, the pressing forward of the Greeks we felt: this fullness of representation is missing at the beginning of the twenty-second canto. Priam's, Hecuba's, and Hector's own speeches contain appropriate rhetoric, but are not outbursts welling from the soul. Very old people are accustomed, like Priam here, to bring forward external matters in moments of highest distress; but had it been Homer's will to make Priam appear so, livelier means would have been at his disposal. The images of the King and Queen calling down from the height do not press themselves upon us urgently enough. We do not see them.

We also do not see the Trojans who, from the wall, listening, follow the conversation in immense expectation. And we do not quite comprehend why Hector returns not a word. I mean, all that could originally have been richer, livelier, more moving, and we have only parts of the genuine text before us. What happens is too much merely reported. The dramatic tension within us, which Homer always evokes in important scenes, is lacking.

What will he do? What will the gods do? What unexpected thing will happen? These questions otherwise always hover on our lips. The beginnings of the twenty-second canto do not urge us into this expectant mood. Even the simile with which Achilles' appearance is marked, when Priam first discovers him in the distance, lacks the sensory power we are accustomed to in such comparisons. "As a star rises on the horizon, whose radiating brilliance announces it as the evil Dog-star, proclaiming heat and other calamity to mortals, so Achilles' shining weapons emerge in the distance." And then, when he stands close before Hector: like the god of war with waving helmet-bush he strides forward. "Unsteadily lies the fearsome ash-trunk of the lance on his right shoulder, and his armor radiates like blazing fire or like the rising sun." More spirited than poetically meaningful. How beautiful, by contrast, is later the comparison of his radiant lance-point with the evening star! Then only, when Hector, involuntarily swept away into flight, is pursued by Achilles, does Homer begin to set in with a full voice. Now the meaningful words and turns of phrase return, which we encounter in him alone, whose sound his contemporary audience alone felt and which offer impossible tasks to today's translators:

> And as the falcon glides down from the mountains
> And throws himself upon the dove, who flees sideways,
> But he, close behind, with a sharp cry
> Seeks to seize her: so close behind Hector
> Flew the Pelide thither, and Hector trembled
> Beneath the wall, from which the Trojans looked down,
> And his knees quivered as he ran along.
> At first they stormed further up to the height,

> Where the watchtower stands by the wind-swept
> Fig tree, always along the wagon-track
> Close by the wall, until to the spring,
> Where the two sources of the Scamander flow,
> One of warm water, and there rises
> Steam upward, as if fire were burning there,

But the other is in the hot summer
Cold as snow and light-frozen ice.
And beside them the stone, beautifully chiseled,
Wide troughs, where the Trojan women,
Beautiful wives and daughters, once in times past,
Before the Greeks came, deep in peace
Washed dazzling laundry. There past
Went the flight and behind it the pursuit.
Noble the quarry, yet stronger he who pursued it.
Not for a sacrificial animal or for a bull's hide,
As is otherwise set as the prize of the race,
No, for Hector's life was the running. [1]

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[1] Stolberg translates (the first five verses standing on the previous page):

As a hawk in the mountains, of all birds the swiftest,
Lightly with mighty swing follows the timid dove;
She escapes him sideways; but with sounding wings
He always shoots after her, driven by wild desire:
Thus stormed forward Achilles. —

Voss, here imitating more learnedly than feeling poetically, at the same time using Stolberg's translation, translates:

Just as a hawk of the mountains, the most nimble of all birds,
Lightly with mighty swing pursues the timid dove;
Sideways she often slips; yet close with clear sound to her
He frequently shoots along, full of hot desire to seize:
Thus that one pressed in flight straight ahead.

Rendered literally in prose the passage reads:

"As the falcon of the mountains, the swiftest of birds, easily hastens after the fearful dove, who however flees to the side, he however pursues her closely with a sharp tone; desire drives him to seize her—so Achilles flew eagerly straight ahead."

In each of these verses I believe I can sense that every single word therein possessed for the ear of the original Homeric audience a special

content, which distinguished it from other words of similar meaning. Beyond this dark sensation, however, I know nothing. Stolberg and Voss probably felt that Homer's peculiarity here must be replaced by something: therefore wide-sounding filler words have been inserted by them (which Voss appropriates from Stolberg). Through this a certain musical effect is produced which has its impact, but of which we do not know how it related to what Homer intended to say in the grandiose simplicity of his diction. Monti renders the passage more simply:

Qual ne' monti sparvier che, de' volanti
Il più ratto, si scaglia impetuoso
Su pavida colomba; ella sen fugge
Obliquamente, e quei doppiando il volo
Vie più l'incalza con acuti stridi,
Di ghermirla bramoso: a questa guisa —
L'ardente Achille difilato vola —

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As the goal in the course by the victory-accustomed
Steeds is circled, so both circled
Priam's citadel for an immense battle-prize.
And the immortals saw it, and there raised
Now his voice the father of gods and men:
Oh, how sad! There runs a man around the walls
Of Troy, who is dear to me. Pity fills me!
How many bulls has he not sacrificed to me
High on Ida or the Trojan citadel!
And Achilles pursues him and will kill him!
Then Athene arose: Lord of Heaven!
Father! Shall the mortal fallen to fate
Now nevertheless be snatched from death?
Do it! To the gods it will not be pleasing!
And Zeus: Console yourself, dear child, I had not
Considered it and remain well-disposed and gracious to you.
Forward! Do what you will and what makes you glad.
And she, in whose heart it had long been seething,

Stormed down from the peak of Olympus. [1]

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[1] Let us compare the assembly of the gods in the fourth canto, when the fate of Troy is debated on Olympus. Above p. 87 ff. Both scenes resemble each other in dramatic structure and execution.

Our feeling tells us that nothing is missing from this passage of the twenty-second canto. The breathlessness of the flight and the length of the way we are meant to feel and do feel. Let us notice how the poet lets us change the standpoint from which we observe. At Achilles' emergence at the outermost edge of the Ilian plain we stood beside Priam, whose glances first discovered him in the distance. Now Achilles is there, and we stand beside Hector at the wall outside.

Now flight and pursuit begin, and we run along. Watchtower and fig tree also fly past us. At the spring, however, by the sources of the Scamander, we halt, look after them, and they disappear. From there transposed beside the gods on Olympus, we discover them again, far in the depths, as they want to overtake each other. Zeus' sudden emotion, however, and Athene's breaking out against the pity overcoming him now occupy our attention. With Athene we then hasten down. Standing beside her at the wall we see the two storming near from afar and learn how they have meanwhile circled the city three times.

As a young stag in the mountains the hound
From its lair through the wooded valleys
And through the ravines drives;
as he tracks it again,
When it hides trembling in the thicket,
Forward and forward: so did the son of Priam
Not escape the son of Peleus, who hunted him.
Sometimes he hoped to reach the gates
Or the towers of the wall, from where his own
Protected him with missiles: but Achilles
Forces him away from the wall toward the open field.

As one in a dream does not get forward in running,
Unable to escape and unable to seize,
So Achilles did not reach Hector,
So Hector was not able to evade him,
But would at last have succumbed to him,
Had Apollo for the last time not
Breathed courage into him and strengthened his knees.
With a nodding head Achilles commanded his own,
Not with sharp arrows or with spears
To touch Hector, for not should
One boast that he had shot him down,
And that Achilles reached him only as the second.
And so for the fourth time they had
Now reached the springs: then the Father stretched
Wide the golden scales. He took
Two of the lots of death, laid both
Here and there on the pans, held the middle
Weighing aloft, and Hector's lot sank deep,
Deep down to Hades, and Apollo left him.

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But to Achilles stepped with radiant glances
Then the goddess Athene; close beside him
She stood and spoke: Now we shall, you and I,
Acquire glory, now the insatiable
Hector shall be killed. Now he escapes us no more,
Even if Apollo, tormented by a thousand pains,
Wallows entreating before the Father's feet.
Stand and catch your breath! Let me now
Bring Hector thither to venture the fight with you.
And leaning on the lance in joyful expectation
Stood Achilles; but she, to the glorious Hector
Stepping closer, assumed his dearest brother's,
Deiphobus', appearance and voice.
And addressing him as "Dear brother"

She said: Achilles has hunted you around our city
Badly: but now we hold our ground
And defend ourselves!
And he: Always of all brothers you have
Stood closest to me, but now you stand
Still closer than before to me in my thoughts,
For for my sake, when you saw with your eyes
What is happening, you have ventured out,
While the others all keep themselves inside.
And Athene said: Dear brother,
Father and mother begged me on their knees
And friends, I should stay inside,
For that one there makes them tremble!
But you moved me to pity too much! Now however
Firmly at him with the lances! It will be shown,
Whether Achilles kills us or you strike him.

Hector, suddenly filled with confidence, goes toward Achilles and addresses him boastfully, as was part of such single combats. Achilles answers in the same tone. Hector demands agreements as to how it should be held after the duel. Each of them should commit himself to deliver the corpse of the fallen opponent untouched by shameful treatment to the friends. The weapons—this Hector adds particularly—remain to the victor. Achilles retorts that between men who hated each other as they both did, nothing could be agreed upon, and hurls the spear at him. Hector however, sinking into his knees, lets the lance fly over him.

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Now Hector aims at the center of Achilles' shield, but his lance bounces off. Turning peevishly to Deiphobus he demands his spear, but no Deiphobus is to be seen! There, still without knowing that Athene gave the uselessly hurled lance back into Achilles' hand, it dawns on Hector that Athene is fighting alongside and that he is lost.

Near is evil death to me and no longer far!
No escape! And Zeus and Apollo have

Yet so gladly stood by me until today.
That was their dearest wish! And now fate seizes me!
But not inglorious do I sink, and how I died,
Of that future times shall speak.
And he reached for the sharp-ground sword,
Which hung down mighty and heavy at his side,
And, like the eagle dwelling in the heights
Throws himself from the black cloud down to the plain,
To rob a hare or a lamb,
So with swung weapon he sprang forward.
But Achilles grew wroth; before his breast
He held the shield for protection; the fourfold divided
Helmet-bush, which Hephaestus' hand from golden
Threads had fashioned, surged and billowed across.
But the point of the spear in his right hand
Scattered light, as into the morning dawn
Hesperus' most beautiful star shines in rays.
Nurturing evil thoughts he examines Hector's
Beautiful form, considering where the lance
Might most surely bore itself into his flesh.
True, the armor protected him everywhere,
That robbed from Patroclus: but at the throat,
Where shoulder and neck join together,
Where for the fleeing life is the easiest exit,
There he struck home with a sure hand, and there penetrated
Out through the soft neck the point;
But the gullet the lance did not injure,
And speech remained. And down fell
Hector there into the dust. —

It is as if with him the walls of Troy collapsed.

Let us remember the Nibelungenlied.

To Siegfried lying at the edge of the spring, who leaning over the water quenched his thirst, Hagen creeping near has thrust the spear between the shoulders. [1]

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[1] Ten Selected Essays. 2nd Ed. 1883. p. 281.

> Furiously he sprang up from the well. There stuck
> Deep in his back the spear; in vain he sought
> Bow and sword and found them not; then he seized
> At last, the shield, the only thing at hand.
> Mortally wounded he nevertheless grasped it powerfully,
> Rushed loose at Hagen and with the rim
> He struck him, so that the bright gemstones
> Loosened from the shield, which sprang in two,
> Struck him to the ground, so that the ground resounded
> All around in the wooded valley, so mightily he struck.
> Had his sword been at hand, he would have
> Killed Hagen, but then death seized him.
> Staggering he feels his strength dissolve.
> Bore in pale color death's sign,
> Down sank into the flowers there Kriemhild's
> Husband, and the blood streamed from his heart.

That is German poetry beside Greek.

How differently things lie in the Iliad. Not Achilles by his own power alone overcomes Hector, but he succumbs to the goddess. Even so, Hector is struck less cruelly than he himself brought the defenseless Patroclus to death, but he is murdered just like the latter. In Siegfried's murder, by contrast, only humans are involved, and so everywhere in this poem, which like the Iliad carries so much misery and beauty within itself. Both works stand there like eternal funerary monuments from which springs of fresh blood still flow. To the spiritual republic forming today of all inhabitants of our globe, the literatures of all times and all peoples are a coherent whole, whose individual parts are to be considered comparatively. Since Herder's *Völkerstimmen* work has been done toward this, today the results arrive.

Iliad and Nibelungen rise as works of art to a height into which they alone project, to stand beside one another as if nothing intervening separated their brotherly relationship.

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How the Iliad and Nibelungen draw human fates, the paths of death of the heroes, however, they differ. The supernatural plays only sparingly into the Nibelungen: Homer's humans are the playthings in gods' hands. So much so, that one could conceive the Iliad as a great divine intrigue, for which the Greeks and Trojans provide only the background. Achilles stands most under the influence of these demons thirsting pitilessly for excitement. He rises from canto to canto. After the death of Patroclus there is hardly any room for free action with him. For that reason alone, our sympathy for him is of a different kind than that for Hector, who acts from his own judgment and resolution. Achilles is so far removed from common human paths that the feeling of responsibility in him no longer occurs to us at all. Hector must pay for what he does. The way he stabs the defenseless Patroclus is unendurable and demands retribution. In the Nibelungen, Siegfried's death is a kind of penance for his half-unconscious disloyalty toward Gunther, whose secret he betrays to his wife. Kriemhild's death, however, in the last canto of the Nibelungen, is the final settlement of an unruly princess. With inexorable consequence the poem has been built in this sense, and an accidental arrangement of existing folk songs is as little possible here as in the Iliad and Odyssey. Whoever were to neglect to read the Nibelungen for the systematic unfolding of the characters would deprive himself of the best part of the enjoyment. From the first verses to the last, almost everything therein is indispensable, and one canto is architecturally set upon the other by the poet. The superfluous falls away of itself as hollow. The decisive things are presented in masterful calculation at times as if they were secondary matters, with a certain indifference, so that our feeling for the inner life of the main persons arises imperceptibly within us, as tends to happen in the own existence of our lives.

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The Nibelungen has been spoken of so often here that it seems necessary to me to give the beginning of the poem in a few words in short. Through newer poems much has been brought into the imagination of the public that stands out of connection with the clarified form of Siegfried's appearance in the Nibelungenlied. He has been broadened by the newer ones into a mythologically indeterminate figure; in the Nibelungenlied he appears, setting aside slight fairy-tale elements, as a real character. His downfall has nothing common-humanly incomprehensible.

King Gunther, Kriemhild's brother, went out to win Brunhild. Siegfried, an independent prince like Gunther, accompanied him. Kriemhild had been promised to him by Gunther. At Brunhild's court he induces Gunther to introduce him as a dependent man. In the contests with the giant-strong Brunhild, which Gunther must endure to obtain her hand, Siegfried, invisible through the tarn-cap, is at Gunther's side. Brunhild is defeated and follows Gunther to Worms, where the double wedding is celebrated. At night Brunhild retains the upper hand over Gunther, whose hands and feet she ties together with her belt. Once more Siegfried stands by his friend and brother-in-law, in whose dark bedchamber he, as if he were Gunther, wrestles with the woman until she lets him pass as the stronger. He takes her belt and a golden ring from her and slips away unrecognized to Kriemhild.

Those were Gunther's and Siegfried's secrets. Siegfried, infatuated by Kriemhild's beauty, gives her belt and ring and tells her what had happened. Then he moves with her into his realm.

Brunhild, however, is rankled that no tribute payments arrive from Siegfried, and she demands he and Kriemhild should appear at court as subjects of her husband, paying him homage. Only after years did this happen. When Gunther wants to talk Brunhild out of that, she speaks in dissimulation of her love for his sister and how she yearns for her. Then Gunther gladly gives in. While Brunhild, however, stands in the belief that a command had been issued, on Gunther's part only a friendly invitation followed. Accompanied by King Siegmund and by a magnificent retinue, Siegfried and Kriemhild appear at Gunther's court.

Now comes what we expect, the clash between the two sisters-in-law. Kriemhild, who through excessive praising of her Siegfried, against whom she disparages Gunther, has brought about the quarrel with Brunhild, is led by the latter's retorts to confront her with the possession of the ring and belt and, moreover, to assert to her face that when Siegfried took these jewels from her, even more was robbed from her by him. A falsehood and a terrible brutality, for under all circumstances Kriemhild ought to have remained silent. Upon entering for early mass in the cathedral, Kriemhild then forces precedence before Brunhild, and the latter complains to her husband. Siegfried is summoned and publicly swears to his and Brunhild's innocence; Kriemhild he beats black and blue for what she has done, and the matter seems settled. Then Hagen enters.

Looking back at the structure of the poem up to this point, we recognize Kriemhild's character as the driving element from the very beginning. Just as the first verse of the Iliad signifies to us that neither the fall of Troy nor Hector's downfall, but the madness of Achilles is to be sung, so the beginning of the Nibelungenlied informs us that the beauty and the pride of Kriemhild form the content of the poem. Kriemhild's first conversation even with her mother, when she did not yet know Siegfried, shows how pride in her beauty and her birth transcend the human in her. The way in which she, provoked by Brunhild, abandons the latter's honor and at the same time the honor of her brother and his child, shows her lack of restraint when she was provoked. Hagen alone offers her resistance, as unrestrained as she herself. Hagen is no more than a proper subject of Gunther, yet at the same time he is the one who holds the fates of the royal house in his hand. Just as Hector's character in the Iliad has been so thoroughly elaborated that one at times becomes doubtful whether he or Achilles is the foremost bearer of the composition, so one might harbor the same hesitation regarding Hagen. In fact, in the *Waltharius* song, which likely precedes the Nibelungenlied in age, Hagen is the spiritual bearer of the highest effect.

In the Nibelungenlied he represents that personal loyalty to the King upon which everything in Germany rested and rests, while Kriemhild's pitiless savagery is the highest driving force of the entire poem beyond him. Hagen and Brunhild agree that Siegfried must die. Hagen knows how to draw Gunther over to this opinion. The murder is decided upon. Hagen undertakes it.

The necessity to save the honor of the royal house was, however, not the only thing that brought Gunther to agree to Hagen's proposals. Rather, a new element, which reminds one of Helen's treasures, which were after all the actual cause of the fall of Troy, contributed to Gunther's resolution: Siegfried's kingdom, toward the possession of which Hagen directed Gunther's desire for rule. Like Agamemnon, the Burgundian king is avaricious. Even more than in the Nibelungen, this trait of character emerged in the *Waltharius* song, which, as I repeat, can be regarded as a precursor to the poem, in which the loyalty of the serving Hagen toward his lord emerges in an even more heroic light. Yet he stands purely enough even in the Nibelungen, for he does nothing for his own advantage.

> Gunther and Hagen deliberated how they in the forest
> Wished to hunt boar and bear and bison.
> Siegfried went with them, they made a halt
> Deep in the forest at a cool spring.
> There he fell. Brunhild had devised that. —
> Across the Rhine went the journey, and outside waited
> Packed up already the splendid hunting garments,
> Then Siegfried took leave of Kriemhild,
> Kissed her on the mouth and spoke: God grant me
> Soon to see you again, to mirror your dear
> Eyes within my own.
> Then there came to her mind what Hagen asked,
> And she begged him in tears: Stay with me!
> At night I have dreamed evilly: two wild boars hunted
> Across the heath and bloody became the flowers,
> That oppresses me so, me poor woman,
> Ah, and weep I must. For I am frightened by
> Evil thoughts of bitter hate and of enmity,

Stay, I counsel you well, go not to the hunt.

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But Siegfried: Dear wife, I shall be
Back with you again in a few days.
Know of no enemies who wish me ill.
All love me here and to none have I
Done evil that could make me indebted to him.
No, she cried, I fear you will not return!
Further I have dreamed in this night,
That above you two mountains collapsed,
And I saw you no more, and that oppresses me.
Then he embraced Kriemhild with his arms,
Kissed her again and again and parted from her,
And she beheld him alive never again. [1]

[1] How much like a folk-song that sounds even in the foreign meter. How sharply, one might say with reporter-like accuracy, by contrast, Hector's and Andromache's last meeting is reported by Homer. In order to become truly aware of the difference between both poems, I ask one to read how Hector's and Andromache's farewell was translated into the Nibelungen-stanza by Julius Schulz (*Schulz and Gesscken, Ancient Greek Lyric in German Rhyme p. 2; W. Herz, Berlin 1895 — now Cotta'sche Buchhandlung*). Here one perceives the difference even more clearly. For as excellently as Schulz has hit the tone of the Nibelungen, and as beautiful as his verses are, the precision with which the report is made here immediately reveals the other origin of the scene. Did the economy of the book permit the passage to be likewise inserted here, then Simrock's modern High German rendering of the farewell of Siegfried from Kriemhild just given would belong as a third piece. Simrock's translation has long since exceeded the fiftieth edition. He has given the Nibelungenlied anew to the German people and has today given the poem a circulation that it could not have had before. The thanks we have to pay to the poet for this work is still outstanding. His monument ought to rise on the banks of the Rhine. (Has meanwhile, 1905, been erected in Bonn.) One should now, however, read through the entire

sixteenth adventure of the Simrock translation of the Nibelungenlied, in which Siegfried's farewell occurs, in order to become rightly conscious of the means with which Homer and the Nibelungen-poet have worked. Siegfried's murder, compared with the fall of Hector, contains the characters of those involved therein more clearly than the Iliad, because superterrestrial powers have no part in it. If we go from the middle of reading the Iliad into that of the Nibelungenlied, we are astonished at the indeterminate, unilluminated quality swimming in a sea of words in the description of the German poet, yet even more so afterward at the definite, firm impression it leaves behind in us. —

I refer also to what was said in the fourth canto and occasionally elsewhere regarding the Nibelungen. Above p. 81 ff.

Even more cruel than the murder of Siegfried is the treatment of Kriemhild, for whom they lay the corpse of her husband at night in the silence before the door of her chamber, so that she might have stepped upon it. How they rob her of her riches. How Hagen confesses to the murder. How she endures all that. Such a woman and princess, mistreated in such a terrible manner, had to brood upon the revenge she took. While the course of the Iliad represents the victory of Achilles over his madness, the Nibelungen give free rein to Kriemhild's madness and end with the great downfall of all. Not sooner does Kriemhild rest than until her three brothers and Hagen lie there dead. Her terrible revenge is understandable to us: she herself felt as a fellow-guilty party! Achilles' revenge on Hector was also so terrible because he felt himself to be the fellow-guilty part in the death of Patroclus. Kriemhild's is understood more directly by us. The sudden outcry of human nature is given by the Nibelungen differently than by the Iliad.

Through German art, not merely the visual, there goes, perhaps as a national tendency, the endeavor to bring broad total representations onto the surface; through that of the Greeks, to isolate their figures plastically. Homer has the endeavor to place the heroes individually, while the poet of the Nibelungen always keeps all close together. They form a mass, they fight shoulder to shoulder. In Aeschylus' and Sophocles' tragedies we

perceive the inner loneliness of the acting figures even more clearly than in Homer. The transformation is brought about by the fact that man draws from the depths of his soul the impulse for what he does and does not do, and that his speeches are accountability reports on this inner process. The influence of antiquity on our poetry from Klopstock to Goethe has especially consisted in giving this exploitation of the innermost existence also as a goal to our art. Therein consists Goethe's Hellenism, which Shakespeare still lacked. Shakespeare depicts more that which has arisen, where Goethe gives that which is arising. The difference is often a hardly noticeable one, but always perceptible nonetheless.

Therein Schiller also differs from Shakespeare, to whom Kleist, by contrast, stands closer. The figures of the Nibelungen are also free of this Greek manner, which, however, has been bestowed by Homer only upon humans, not upon the gods. The heroes whom the poet of the Nibelungenlied lets act and suffer hardly think. Moved by strong feelings to which they surrender themselves without asking after their origin, they act ruthlessly with violence and as if they did not know what remorse and conscience were, in full steam ahead, immediately. They do not waver. Will and deed follow each other directly. The series of thoughts spinning themselves out in the soul they do not know; they do not arrive at resolutions in internal dialogue with themselves. They know nothing of sensitivity, they are not nervous. Nervousness is a product of long cultural life with crowded population. Achilles is nervous. The poet of the Iliad could have lived at the conclusion of a cultural period. Achilles is a hero in lonely mental torment like Hamlet. A brooder over what he is in the world for. The other Greek and Trojan heroes also drag themselves along with pasts overburdened by fates. No trace of this among those of the Nibelungenlied. Hagen goes straight ahead without ulterior thoughts. He murders Siegfried in good faith, as a serving man owing this to the royal house. That simply had to be so. In the *Waltharius* song, which is closely linked with that of the Nibelungen, we see him bring another sacrifice to this duty of service that cannot be thought of as greater: obeying the command of the King, he fights to the death with his best friend and brother-in-arms. In this poem Gunther's avarice also

emerges much more sharply than in the Nibelungen. Even more than the Nibelungen it rests entirely upon the characters, and little that is supernatural or merely fantastic participates in the events.

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I discover in Homer no character who could be carried over into the Nibelungen or showed internal relationship. In general historical terms, however, similar situations take a similar course. The dying Siegfried and the dying Hector meet in that in their last words they address pleas to those who take their lives. How differently, however, here and there. Siegfried begs to spare his wife, Hector adjures Achilles for the delivery of his dead body to his parents, so that it may receive an honorable burial. Here I return to the twenty-second canto of the Iliad.

It would be in our sense that from the moment Hector lies there struck to death, Achilles' thirst for revenge would be stilled. In this, however, he resembles the Olympian gods more than humans, that where he has once begun to hate, he remains irreconcilable. In ten full verses he makes it clear to the dying Hector that he intends to throw his corpse, whose raw flesh he would most like to tear with his own teeth, to the dogs and vultures as fodder. Hector replies that he had well known that Achilles carried an iron heart in his breast. Then in his last words he reveals to Achilles his own impending final fate. We have heard it several times already.

> That you have an iron heart, I knew well.
> On that day, when in the Scaean gate
> You, brave as you are, Paris and Apollo
> Strike down — may the gods then
> Not remember that which you do to me.
> Then death veiled the conclusion of the speech,
> And the soul, flying down to Hades,
> Lamented for its early-lost existence.
> But Achilles giving answer to the dead:
> Go thy way! When Zeus and the immortals
> Command me to die, I shall be ready!
> And from the dead he tore the spear from the flesh,

Stripped the bloody armor from his shoulders,
And the Greeks ran thither and marveled at
Hector's splendid stature. There was none
Who did not stab or thrust at him. Then said
One to another: Softer he feels today,
Than when he wished to burn the ships,
And speaking thus he thrust at the corpse.

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What now follows, Achilles initially did not have in mind. His opinion was rather that the effect of the first terror of the Trojans over Hector's loss must be utilized and the city taken at once.

Another thought comes to him: intoning the song of victory, he wants to lead the corpse of Hector to the ships with the Greeks. But still more he does. It is as if the full savagery only now breaks through in him and as if he acts without thought. "Shameful outrages he commits on Hector's corpse." And now Homer describes how Achilles drags the dead man, bound by the feet to his chariot, three times around the walls of Ilium in the sight of the Trojans filling the height of the wall.

A final intensification of the misery occurs through the manner in which Andromache learns of Hector's death. [1]

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[1] Above p. 139 ff.

He had commanded her upon parting to keep herself quietly at work in her house. She sits at the loom, without concerning herself with the things outside. Everything for the reception of her husband is prepared. Then suddenly she is thrust into the knowledge of what has happened. The Iliad does not contain much that would be more heart-moving than these scenes. At the same time, they are very artistic in structure. From the foreboding of what occurred to the words in which Andromache describes the lot of Astyanax, robbed of his father, Homer gives the most touching of which he was capable. Quite striking here becomes how he simultaneously creates a visible image of what is happening within us. The involuntarily descriptive

in him emerges. We hear and see along. I have already presented the scenes by way of anticipation in the sixth canto. The Nibelungenlied lacks this vividness. It lets us see and hear less, but feel even more. One may compare how Kriemhild and how Andromache sink down in a faint.

The twenty-second canto of the Iliad resembles a tragedy in its structure. Epic in the beginning, dramatic in the middle, lyrical in the conclusion. If we consider it toward this general economy, then the somewhat dry beginnings of the canto now disconcert us less. Their manner of reporting in broken pieces would have been necessary for the sake of what follows. Nevertheless, I stand by the view that much was lost here.

Twenty-third Book

The events of the canto preceding the last take place in the Greek camp alone. In the twenty-second it was told how Achilles, when he had dragged Hector's corpse thrice around the city, steered his team with it to the camp. How the Greeks there, each going to his ship, disperse, but the Myrmidons, before they unharness their steeds, drive and walk thrice around the body of Patroclus and then, sitting with Achilles on the shore of the sea, begin to lament. Achilles promises the dead friend renewed mistreatment of Hector and the sacrifice of Trojan youths slaughtered in his honor. Finally, Hector's corpse remains lying in the dust at the feet of that of Patroclus.

Only now do the Myrmidons disarm and enjoy the evening meal; Achilles provides it for them. The slaughtering of bulls, rams, goats, and swine begins. He does not take part in it. The Greek princes conduct him to Agamemnon. He is so filled with the memory of Patroclus that only upon persuasion is he convinced to undertake the way. Agamemnon commands a bath to be prepared for him, but he vows with an oath not to wash the bloody dust from his limbs before Patroclus has been burned and a tomb heaped up for him. In entreating words he calls upon Agamemnon to give

the necessary orders so that the tireless fire may the more quickly withdraw the corpse of Patroclus from sight and the people “go back to work.”

Now the princes also take their meal and each seeks his tent. Achilles, however, lies surrounded by the Myrmidons, on the open sand where the waves beat against the shore. There he falls asleep, for the race around the city had made his knees weary.

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To him steps the deceased, as large as he had been in life, with the same look, the same voice, and in the accustomed raiment. Standing at Achilles’ head, he addresses him. “Why do you sleep and have forgotten me?” he asks. “In life you never forgot me, why now in death? Bury me, so that I may soon enter the gates of Hades. The souls, the images of those gone to rest, keep me far away. They do not let me cross over to them. In vain I wander about before Hades’ house. Give me your hand, I implore you. For neither can I return hither from Hades once you have burned me. No longer shall we discuss in life there what the far dear friends are doing. There the fearsome death encompasses me, to which I was already assigned at birth. And for you yourself, godlike Achilles, it stands ahead to be killed under the wall by the noble Trojans. And this also I tell you, that you may remember it: let my bones not be interred far from yours, but together, as we grew up together.”

And now Patroclus reminds him how he came as a child to Achilles’ father, and he raised him as Achilles’ serving friend. And so the same funeral urn shall now encompass their bones.

It has already been pointed out how Achilles’ near end is mentioned so often in the form of prophecies that we know it precisely in advance and no following canto would need to describe it particularly. Like a mockery sounded Hector’s prediction that at the Scaean gate, thus inside and outside the Trojan walls, Paris, the least warlike of the Trojans, should fell Achilles. Of Achilles’ invulnerability, the heel of one foot alone excepted, the Iliad knows nothing; the Odyssey too, when in the twenty-fourth canto Achilles’ end is told, brings nothing of it. We learn only that Achilles falls. At the

conclusion of the Iliad, he appears so entirely as one fallen prey to death, that this view penetrates our imagination completely.

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Let us notice how strangely sharp the merely shadow-like quality of existence in Hades is emphasized by Homer. But already in the Odyssey the inhabitants of the underworld appear to us less lifeless. In Avernus, by contrast, the underworld of Virgil, the dead continue their earthly existence differently from the Homeric ones. They are still stuck in the feelings they cherished as humans. We find various stages of blessedness. Children and suicides have their own existence. A purification takes place, of which Homer knows nothing. It is striking how Dante, who has Virgil as a model, nevertheless stands closer to Homer than the former. Virgil seeks modern effects for his own public after the Homeric pattern. He is a Romantic. Dante, by contrast, treats the things of his Inferno with such seriousness that they assume something of reality. Although the figures of the *Divina Commedia* are also meant to be only shadows, they endure spiritual and physical torments and take passionate part in the earthly fates of those still in life. The scene of our canto which now follows lets it be clearly recognized how these transformations have been fulfilled according to the spirit of newer times.

“Achilles however answered Patroclus: Why, o brotherly head, do you come hither and tell me this? Everything I will execute as you command. But step closer, that we may enjoy the happiness of shared mourning while embracing. Speaking thus he reached for him with his hands and did not grasp him: Patroclus’ soul sank down to the earth like vanishing smoke.” In the Odyssey, Odysseus, having descended into the dwellings of the dead, wishes to embrace his mother, but she becomes a nothing in his arms. In Avernus, Virgil lets Aeneas make the vain attempt to draw his father to his heart, and after that Dante composed the magnificent scene where he himself at the foot of the mountain, from whose slopes the spirits still in need of purification work their way up to Paradise, finds his friend Casella and seeks in vain to embrace him. In this already Dante stands closer to Homer than Virgil, in that he lets two friends meet each other.

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Even more so in that he lends the meeting the appearance of a real event, which lets Homer's and Dante's wonderful representations still work so strongly upon us. In the Nibelungenlied such ideas play no role. There the dead are gone and done with. In Shakespeare they enter as players, and also in Goethe's poetry.

I point to Homer's way of connecting the real work of woodcutting for Patroclus' pyre directly to Patroclus' wavering dream-apparition. Achilles, as Patroclus so suddenly vanishes from him, starts up from sleep, the day breaks, Agamemnon commands, as he had promised, the departure into the mountains. Equipped with axes and ropes the people set out, the unladen mules stride ahead of the train. Upwards goes their path to the height of the spring-rich mountain Ida. There stand the mighty oaks, which are hewn until they overturn crashingly. The trunks are split and the mules packed with the logs. Eager to reach the plain again, the animals work their way down through the thick brushwood, sinking with their hoofs into the soil. And the men also carry blocks. Thus it goes until the promontory, where Achilles lets the burial mound intended also for himself be raised for his friend. There they throw the wood down one after another, layer it round about, and sit down together.

Each of the only twenty verses in which this is described is rich in content, but would be much more so were we acquainted with the intimate meaning of some of the words that fell out of use in the later language. Let us take only the verses in which the ascent of the still unladen animals is described: "Before the men however went the mules: manifoldly up, down, to the side and crosswise they went." The throng of the animals, as one leaps out onto a rock, another down, as one seeks to come out better on a detour to the side and again one standing crosswise cannot go further. And then: "the animals however divided the forest floor with their hoofs, longingly for the plain, through thick brushwood."

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How one sees them there, burdened with their load, now eagerly working their way into the depths! All this, it seems to me, Homer expressed in the

language of the day, just as everywhere manual laborers use special words for their special doing. So that Homer's initial listeners knew at once: that one has been there at the woodcutting in the mountains! I have often pointed out how this feeling of the highest participating involvement in all human doing resounds from Homer's diction. Who will — I repeat this question also — understand in two or three thousand years from today the sound that German verses of this kind breathe out? Such things are irretrievably lost, like the uppermost layer of transparent color from paintings, which lies over them like a living breath and often lasts hardly as long as the artist himself who created the work. The two last cantos of the Iliad suffer most under this loss because the technical work on them shows such great perfection. In an evenly gentle step the narration proceeds forward. As we were gradually made acquainted with the conditions and persons in the first cantos, we here gradually take leave of them. Those who among the Greek princes have most excited our sympathy appear once more, each acting for the last time according to his character and indeed in new illumination. For the visible content of the twenty-third canto is formed by the burial of Patroclus, the more intimate content however by the individual participation of the Greek princes in the funeral games arranged in his honor by Achilles. A magnificent thought: after the poem until then had been filled with murder in every form, to bring forward peaceful combats at the conclusion, so that, the sacrificial animals excepted, of which there was need for the celebration of the burial, nothing living is destroyed this time but the dove, which an arrow-shot brings down from the airs and with whose sinking the canto closes.

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Almost nothing further would need to be expressed in the consideration of this canto. It contains the description of the funeral solemnities, one could say: the program of what Achilles and the Greeks under Agamemnon's command undertake in honor of Patroclus. Again Homer knows how to insert into these things — in sharp contrast to what happens at Hector's interment in the following canto — supernatural, fairy-tale elements, for which the real serves as confirmation, as it were. Let us notice how by the fact that the poet connected the woodcutter's work in the

mountains to the dream-apparition of Patroclus, the fantastic nature of this dream received something of reality. And so also in the sequel now, when he lets the gods intervene in the burial, the rank of the simply factual is conferred upon what the gods do. Through this interference the funeral solemnities are divided into a series of artistically impressive scenes. For Homer's main intention always remains never to weary his listeners, never to communicate more to them than they might have wished to hear, and to sharpen their participation through non-breaking contrasts.

Let us consider the series of following images.

First image: the throwing down of the wood on the promontory.

Second: The procession of the Myrmidons in full armor, the corpse of Patroclus in their midst, whose head Achilles holds.

Third: Arrival at the spot of the promontory where the monument is to rise. The wood is heaped up around Patroclus.

Fourth: Achilles, standing aside, cuts off his blond hair to lay it on the corpse. He addresses the river-god Spercheios, to whom this hair had once been vowed by Peleus if Achilles returned happily home. He tells what Peleus besides had wished to do in honor of the god. "Looking across the dark sea" Achilles says this. Then he gives the hair into Patroclus' hands.

Fifth: The construction of the pyre. The surrounding and covering of the corpse with slaughtered sacrificial animals. With immense effort Achilles throws four horses on top of it, two of Patroclus' nine dogs, and twelve noble Trojan sons, who are slaughtered like cattle.

Sixth: The pyre is set in flames and Patroclus addressed for the last time.

Seventh: The corpse of Hector, which is to be thrown to the dogs, the dogs do not touch. Description of how Aphrodite day and night protects Hector's corpse, anoints it with ambrosial oil and Apollo spreads a cloud over it to preserve it from the decomposing rays of the sun.

Eighth image: The pyre will not burn. Achilles adjures Boreas and Zephyr with promise of sacrifices to blow upon the fire. Iris brings his plea to the two storm-gods.

Suddenly we are carried far away into their palace and their intervention brought into the first line, so that the burial of Patroclus now forms only the background.

> But to the winds hastened the fleeting Iris.
> In the whistling Zephyros' hall they were sitting
> All at table, and on the stone threshold
> The goddess made a halt, and all of them sprang
> Up from their seats when they beheld her.
> Each individually asked her to enter.
> She however declined it. No, no chair!
> For I must away again to the Ethiopians,
> Where they are just now bringing sacrifices to the gods
> And I would like to have my part at the banquet.
> But Achilles entreats with beautiful sacrifices,
> Zephyr and Boreas might see the pyre
> Properly in flames, which encompasses Patroclus,
> For whom the Greeks mourn.
> Therewith she hastened away. The two however
> Drove up with divine thunder-roar,
> Flying clouds ahead, and whistling through the sea
> The waves they stirred up with their breath,
> Came down to the Trojan plain and fell
> Into the midst of the burning wood of the pyre,
> So that the fire with loud crackling flew upwards;
> And thus they let the night through both together
> The flying flames blaze into the height.
> But Achilles, from the golden wine-vessel
> Drawing with the double goblet, stood
> Beside the glow and called for his friend.

What a series of paintings lies in these verses. I could imagine a hall of the Farnesina by Raphael painted therewith. I have already expressed earlier how Raphael's divine scenes of the Farnesina, according to my feeling, illustrate Homer most faithfully. These verses, had Raphael known them, must have irresistibly stimulated his imagination. They tear us out of the funeral mood of the twenty-third canto so that we return completely refreshed to Patroclus' burial.

With the dawning new day, the flames collapse into themselves. The winds have accomplished their work and return home, to the Thracian sea, which roars up. Achilles lies down to sleep until the conversation of the arriving princes wakes him again. To them he expresses what should happen. Patroclus' bones are interred in a golden vessel and a moderate burial mound heaped over them. Only after his own death will the same vessel then also receive Achilles' bones and a great tomb be heaped up by the Greeks who survive him.

All this however only as a quarter of the twenty-third canto, the introduction to the funeral games of the princes for which Achilles sets out precious prizes. The people had dampened the glowing ash with wine, interred the bones and heaped the tomb in a circle; they wished to leave the place when Achilles holds them back and carries forth from his quarters brazen kettles and tripods, horses, mules and bulls, women and iron. It is then determined by him for which contests he sets out such and such prizes, and first for those who wish to participate in the chariot race.

There now we see the foremost among the Greek heroes again. Individually they are enumerated, and for the last time their strength unfolds before us in highest peaceful effort. There we hear once more their teams and the origin of their steeds praised. For the last time also we hear Nestor's broad, well-meaning tales from the old times which only he had lived through.

His grandson Antilochus wishes to try his hand at the chariot race, and Nestor gives him good lessons as to how he should behave. He takes the position of an honorary president as the foremost umpire, since he himself

can no longer participate as a combatant. From the beginning to the conclusion of the Iliad, Nestor has appeared in a self-consistent manner. Always the same, yet never repeating himself. If we put together all the parts of the Iliad in which he appears, none is superfluous; they manifest the intimate acquaintance of the poet with Nestor's peculiarities. His nature, clarified by experience, was ultimately made more for peace than for war, and thus the twenty-third canto provides the last missing accent. In the Odyssey, Homer lets Nestor appear once more, now delivered from all outward unrest. This has been discussed.

Like him, Antilochus receives the final rounding in the twenty-third canto. From the Odyssey we then learn that he will not return home; for the Iliad that is indifferent. The way Nestor instructs him about the guiding of horses in the chariot race shows their relationship in an amiable manner. The new element that the twenty-third canto brings of Antilochus forms a confirmation of his modest, considerate nature toward elders. He succeeds, upon Nestor's instructions, in getting ahead of Menelaus' more efficient team. Menelaus notices that cunning is in play and disputes the prize with Antilochus, who in a graceful manner steps back. Menelaus is so moved by this that he renounces the prize in favor of Antilochus. It was noted above how this last coming-short of Menelaus and his mild, conciliatory manner corresponds to the role he played among the Greeks, so that for him too in this failed contest lies a last confirming accent for his nature. The description of the chariot race in the twenty-third canto is for me a very high technical achievement. The Iliad is filled with the behavior of horses and their drivers: how Homer characterizes the individual teams here, however, he shows, since it concerns the description of so many animals at the same time, his talent from a new side.

Of the noble steeds of the Iliad also we take leave in the twenty-third canto. Let us remember how at the race of Hector and Achilles around the walls of Ilios the means had been applied to let them first vanish from our sight and then come near again from the distance: likewise, Homer lets the teams first hurry away and then from the distance, indistinctly at first, approach us again. How Ajax, the son of Oileus, and Idomeneus, as belonging to the

umpires, fall into dispute whose chariot it was that first became visible, how they proceed to serious words and Achilles must bring them apart, is depicted with mastery. Let it be said here at once that Ajax Oileus also in his self-righteous manner receives the final settlement in the twenty-third canto. The description of how Odysseus gets ahead of him in the footrace is characteristic of Homer's gift for making people ridiculous quite incidentally. Ajax Oileus slips, strikes with his face into the bloody filth that fills the slaughtering place of the sacrificial animals, and has his mouth full of offal. A better accident could not be devised for him whose foul mouth was known in the army. In the Odyssey, Ajax is subsequently stamped once more. Let us notice by the way how Idomeneus in our canto just goes along beside the other heroes, so that thereby the lack of special shining-forth of his figure in the earlier cantos is confirmed as lying in Homer's intentions. Homer maintains a firm economy in the whole poem and was conscious at every point of his work how the remaining parts related to the one he was just working on.

For this something seemingly insignificant may be noted here. At the sale of Lycaon to Lemnos and his return from there to Troy it had been told how Lycaon in Lemnos was first bought by the son of Jason. Now Homer returns to this first sale of Lycaon, and indeed therewith it is simultaneously explained who in the seventh canto (V. 469) Euneos, the son of Jason, was, who sent wine-laden ships from Lemnos into the camp of the Greeks and offered them for sale there.

This Euneos it had been to whom Patroclus, as Achilles' business manager, sold Lycaon, and indeed for the silver wine-vessel holding six measures which Achilles set out as the prize for the footrace. Lycaon is mentioned here only occasionally, the acquaintance with his fates however presupposed and the history of the wine-vessel told. All wine-vessels of the whole earth this one defeated through its beauty. Sidonian artists created it. Phoenician men carried it across the sea and gave it to Thoas in Lemnos, from him it came there into the hands of Euneos, who was the son of Jason and Hypsipyle, Thoas' daughter, and Euneos gave it to Patroclus as the purchase price for Lycaon. It must be striking how these accidental

insertions into various cantos join together complementarily, so that the history of this silver vessel for mixing wine forms a small novel for itself. Homer repeats in none of these places what has already been said, but always adds a small novelty that increases our knowledge by a little piece. I remember also what role the booty of King Eetion plays in the Iliad and how it is spoken of once more in the twenty-third canto. It too is something existing for itself which has its history.

From Odysseus too we take leave in the twenty-third canto, and the character of the "cunning man" is only here definitely assigned to him. Where he fights for the prize in the footrace with Ajax, the son of Oileus, and wrestling with Ajax the Telamonian, he knows both times how to attain the decisive advantage through cunning. Of that which distinguishes the Odysseus of the Iliad from that of the Odyssey, it has already been spoken. One could say that in the twenty-third canto of the Iliad the Odysseus of the Odyssey is prepared.

Diomedes' appearance in the twenty-third canto was most of all an aesthetic requirement, for him Homer had suddenly removed from the scene in order to make room for Achilles. In the chariot race of the teams he takes part and wins the first prize through Athene's help.

While Achilles, by the way, steps forward decisively in the distribution of the prizes, he is not mentioned by name in the gifts falling to Diomedes. The poet remains true to himself therein, not letting Diomedes and Achilles meet speaking in the course of the poem. [1]

[1] Of that too there was already talk earlier. I only note occasionally where I bring forward remarks repeatedly because they must be made repeatedly on account of newly entering material. I have also not indeed united all passages which were to be disposed of as belonging together all at once. For every passage presents itself where it is found as the main matter, as it were, which has a right to be treated for itself.

If Diomedes' special manner does not emerge in the chariot race, it appears all the more sharply in the dispute of Ajax the Telamonian with him, which threatens to become so serious that the princes finally bid a halt. The Telamonian, parrying Diomedes' attack, stands before us in the fullness of his superior strength for the last time in an ideal light. In the Odyssey we meet him once more. He is the only one of all the Greek heroes whom we love, while Diomedes' heroism never wins our inclination. At this last appearance of Diomedes, we feel most clearly the reason for our cool admiration: the way he seeks to strike Ajax has something unlovely. With sharp weapons they were to fight and he be declared victor who first injured the skin of the other to the point of blood. Diomedes now picks out the spot for his attack at which Achilles had mortally struck Hector with the lance. It displeases us that Diomedes wants to strike his peaceful opponent exactly here. The princes make an objection because they fear for Ajax's life, and at the same time award the battle-prize to both. Here Homer reminds us once more of Sarpedon. For his weapons formed the prize: lance, shield, and helmet, which Patroclus had taken from him and which had passed over to Achilles. These weapons are a last echo of his personality.

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Fully illuminated in the foreground of the twenty-third canto are only those who have achieved an individuality within the poem. We find them all again; only Agamemnon is still missing. How will Homer settle accounts with him? In an almost ironic fashion.

Agamemnon was as little permitted to join the combat as Achilles himself. As king, he could not expose himself to the possibility of being defeated. Thus, Agamemnon holds himself back until he rises at the conclusion of the games, when Achilles sets out the final prize: a lance and a precious vessel for those who should perform the best spear-throw. Agamemnon and Meriones (who had already won several prizes) announce themselves.

It should further be pointed out how much this final entry of Agamemnon appears as a mere appendage to the twenty-third canto, which would otherwise fade out in a friendly manner with the shot at the dove—a

conclusion that would have to count as a special beauty. For Homer has ordered the sequence of the tests of strength so that attention was always newly piqued through internal and external contrasts. After matters had nearly come to actual combat between Diomedes and the Telamonian Ajax, the series of competitive trials was exhausted, and only as a postscript was the massive round lump of iron—originating from the booty of Eetion—placed as a prize, where the throw concerned raw physical power. Polypoetes carried it away, having been honorably mentioned earlier because he stood as unyielding as a storm-shaken oak when the Trojans broke through the rampart around the camp (twelfth canto). Even the Telamonian Ajax was unable to surpass Polypoetes here.

Lastly, the archers perform a test of their art. A dove is tied by a thread to the top of a set-up mast. Teucer shoots first, but merely cuts the thread without hitting the bird, which flies away. Now Meriones takes the bow. High in the clouds directly above him the dove hovers, tracing its circles there.

Meriones releases the arrow, which, falling back down, lands directly at his feet. But the bird also comes down; it perches on the tip of the mast, lets its head hang and its wings sink, and falls. All the people watch this in astonishment. Meriones takes the more precious of the two set prizes; Teucer contents himself with the second.

With this scene, told as gracefully as if it belonged to the Odyssey, the twenty-third canto would have found a conclusion corresponding to the spirit with which it is filled. Without transition and in the tone of dry reporting, the eighteen verses concerning Agamemnon are appended. They have something of a lagging quality, contain nothing new, and give the canto a bare, indifferent finale. It seems to me, however, that this lay in the poet’s intention. Perhaps Homer gave the canto this conclusion because he wanted to illuminate not only Agamemnon’s avarice, but even more so Achilles’ noble kindness toward the king. For these two continued to hate each other in silence. Meriones had indeed announced himself alongside Agamemnon, and the supreme commander might perhaps have been

deprived of the first prize. Achilles perceived that Agamemnon had placed himself in a false position and intervened. He addresses him to explain that everyone in the camp knows how much he is superior to all others, and it goes without saying that he deserves the first prize as victor even without providing a new proof of this fact. There lies a subtle reproach in this reasoning, but it does not prevent the king from having the first prize carried away.

Again and again, I imagine the cantos of the Iliad as set to music by Beethoven or Schubert. As a musical composition, the twenty-third canto would offer magnificent contrasts. Only in the place assigned to it by Homer as the precursor to the concluding twenty-fourth canto does it possess its full value. Were we to assume a continuation of the Iliad after the twenty-fourth canto, the twenty-third would lose its significance.

If we say to ourselves that the entire poem represents the principal characters of the Greek army as engaged in progressive development, then it would now have to be asked how Homer would have been capable of bringing forward anything new in further cantos. Only through factual events could he have continued to astonish us, but even these surprises would have been anticipated in prospective descriptions. What events might still have been given, if the death of Achilles or the conquest of the city were taken as the ultimate goal of the Iliad, we see from the Odyssey, in which these things have been subsequently reported by Homer in incidental narratives. The twenty-third canto would then appear as a decorative insertion merely delaying the progress of things.

Twenty-fourth Book

With the conclusion of the funeral games, we thus took leave of the leaders of the army. The fates of the Greek heroes, upon whose characters the struggle for the city rests in Homer’s representation, require no further continuation. We know them thoroughly. Whatever in the Greek legend—

which occupied itself with them extensively for centuries—is still done and experienced by them outside the scope of the Iliad has no value for the Iliad, but must, insofar as we regard the poem as a work of art, be ignored. Even the Odyssey must not be taken into consideration here. It contains nothing that contradicts the Iliad, but only—again in the sense of a rounded work of art—echoes and continuations of no consequence for the Iliad, while the latter, however, becomes the prerequisite for the Odyssey.

How much the poet was concerned with a specific few men in the twenty-four cantos of the Iliad is shown especially in the twenty-third canto, but also in all preceding ones, by the neglect or ignoring of many who, like them, had Homer only wished it, could have laid claim to standing in the foreground as actors. Only out of artistic considerations did he set them back. He was not writing history, but composing poetry.

Among the Myrmidons alone we find men who might pique our curiosity. Achilles' father had, by a mother other than Thetis, a daughter Polydora, and she, by the river-god Spercheios, a son Menesthius, who went along to Troy—a nephew of Achilles, then. But he is mentioned only a single time and nowhere plays a role in the camp. Only how his breastplate was fashioned do we learn. And it is further reported that his mother was married to Boros, the son of Perieres. All this is told with that intimate accent as if everyone knew of it. There is further, no less interesting by his origin, Eudorus among the leaders of the Myrmidons, whom Polymele bore to Hermes. The story of his birth is inserted as a small novella: one might believe that Eudorus was called by the poet to experience and do much, yet he appears and vanishes. There was further Peisander, standing almost equal to Patroclus as a spear-thrower. Then also Phoenix, who is initially brought so broadly into the foreground, but whom we lose from sight in the later cantos. We also find Automedon and Alcimus, the personal servants of Achilles, whom he valued highest after the loss of Patroclus. Automedon especially appears more often, Achilles' charioteer, whom he sent with Patroclus and who joined the fight after the latter's death. Here he is indeed designated as "unwarlike," but later as a "hero." Nevertheless, he and Alcimus, the scion of Ares, remain without personality and are dispatched

with the mention of their names. Homer lets none of those whom I am just picking out and enumerating announce themselves as competitors in the funeral games of the twenty-third canto.

For the conclusion of the Iliad, it is necessary that Achilles be lonely without Patroclus. This is the reason why no one from the Myrmidons stands closer to him. He sat at the meal by himself; the others ate apart from him in the tent.

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No general conversation prevailed. This was necessary in order later to introduce Priam correctly to Achilles. Every canto of the Iliad has certain brilliant situations forming the center of the events, upon whose positioning toward one another its effect as a whole rests. For the correct distribution of effects, everything is done by Homer, and whatever does not serve them is sacrificed, while whatever promotes the attainment of the aesthetic purpose is added. Thus proceed Dante, Shakespeare, and Goethe, and naturally Schiller as well. That birth-story of Eudorus was only brought into the text to take the dry, catalog-like quality away from the enumeration of the Myrmidonian principal persons. Also, Achilles, when his people were finally allowed to fight again, had to be surrounded by noted warriors; what becomes of them later, however, is again indifferent to the poetry. In this sense, much is given that, without deeper meaning, was intended to work only decoratively. The claims which realistic, calculating critics might wish to raise were as indifferent to Homer as were, perhaps, to Goethe the reservations of those who asserted that in *Faust* many transitions were unclear, that in *Wilhelm Meister* and *Elective Affinities* it never becomes winter, and the like.

The twenty-fourth canto begins as if it formed a whole with the previous one.

> The game was over. The peoples, streaming hither
> And thither, each sought his ship for rest.
> Thought of food and sleep. Only Achilles
> Wept, and all-subduing sleep disdained
> To conquer him. To and fro he tossed,

Full of longing for Patroclus. Ah, how much
Had they both gone through together,
How many men and storms together endured!
Of this he thought in tears. Now on his side
He lay, then on his back, then on his face, [1]

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[1] This description of nocturnal restlessness was taken up by Virgil and after him by the poet of the *Waltharius* song.

Then sprang up and paced on the shore of the sea
Up and down and in a circle, and thus appeared to him
Over shore and sea the young day.
And now he harnessed the horses before the chariot,
Bound Hector thereto and dragged him thrice
Around the burial mound. Then he let him
Lie stretched out on the muddy road,
With his face upon the earth. But Apollo
Prevented shameful things from marring his skin.
Holding the golden aegis over the corpse,
He shielded him and protected him from defilement.
But the gods saw it, and it grieved them.
And to the slayer of Argus, the cunning Hermes,
They gave the task to abduct the body.
All were at one, only Hera would not,
Nor Athene, nor also Poseidon,
For they hated Priam and his people
Because of Paris, who, when the goddesses came,
Rejected Hera and Athene with mockery
And gave the rank before them to the third,
Who granted him the disastrous happiness.

Here for the first time the judgment of Paris, the primal beginning of the Trojan war, is mentioned! And how briefly it is told. Incidentally, as if it had long since been reported. Neither Helen, nor even Aphrodite, does Homer call by name. And while otherwise his manner is to expand upon

more indifferent matters, he contents himself here with a simple allusion. Perhaps the adventure was so well known in Ionia that Homer therefore did not specially relate it earlier; yet the assumption seems more natural to me that the relevant piece of the Iliad has been lost. Strange also that nowhere in it is it told by what services Achilles' father won the favor of Hera to such a high degree that she forced Thetis to become his spouse. The mockery with which Paris rejected Hera and Athene must have been intolerable, otherwise Poseidon, who was sensitive in matters of etiquette, would not have declared for the goddesses.

On Olympus the matter is now adjourned. For twelve days things continue thus, until Apollo can no longer watch the mistreatment of Hector and brings it forward again.

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But when twelve times since then the dawn
Newly arose, Phoebus took the word and said:
Cruel you are and disastrous! Has Hector
Not brought us sacrifices? And now, since he is dead,
Do you do nothing for him? Shall his wife,
Shall mother and child not see him once more,
And his father not? And his people? Who with fire
Then would bury him? No, you destructive ones wish
To yield to the mad Achilles!
Great and mighty and proud is also the lion,
But murder and blood are his only doing,
Compassionate mercy is foreign to him,
Which distinguishes man from the beast of prey.
Has not many a one lost his beloved friend,
Or his brother or his son,
And finally he sets a goal to his mourning?
For man finds himself in his fate
And endures what is to be borne. But that one
Drags the divine Hector's dead body
Ever anew around his friend's burial mound!
Neither good nor beautiful is that. And we gods

Must be wroth with him, that he insults
The silent, uncomplaining Mother Earth with his doing.

Furiously Hera leaps up. Whether there be no difference between Hector and Achilles? Hector had sucked at a mortal mother's breasts, while she herself had once given Achilles' mother to drink. Then Peleus had chosen her as spouse and all the gods had sat at the wedding table,

And you yourself, evil fellow, sat,
Faithless one, at the wedding feast and played!

Zeus enters soothingly. No one should disparage Achilles. Hector had always brought him pleasant sacrifices and gifts and was the dearest to him among the Trojans. That Hermes should steal the body is impossible, because Achilles' mother watches day and night. If only she were there! If only someone would call her, so that one might talk reason into her. Perhaps Achilles will let himself be pacified by gifts from Priam.

Zeus always has the endeavor to make it right for everyone. Let us remember on the face of the Zeus of Otricoli the mixture of immeasurable strength with kindness.

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Of the world-encompassing quality of the forehead. Of the threatening and the soothing. Michelangelo's God the Father on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, however, equals him or rather surpasses him.

Zeus, then, has spoken:

And already like a storm-wind Iris flew away,
And between Samos and Lesbos she sprang into the sea,
So that with a roar the dark waves trembled.
And in the shimmering depth she found Thetis,
Who with her sisters wept for Achilleus,
Because far from the land that bore him,
He was to die in Troas. Close by the goddess
Stood the fleeting Iris: Thetis, up!
Zeus summons you! And she: The great Zeus?

What can he want? Bashfulness and shame forbid me
To appear among the immortal gods,
Deeply distressed as I am. Yet if it is a command,
I must obey. Veiled herself in her black
Shroud and followed Iris, who went before.
And the waves bowed to the side,
And from the shore they both flew up,
Found the great son of Cronos. And the blessed,
Eternal gods sat round about in a circle,
And Athene made room for Thetis,
Hera however, with friendly words,
Gave the golden goblet into her hands.
And she rose and drank, and there began
The father of the immortals and of men:
Filled with infinite sorrow you come
Nonetheless to Olympus. I know it. But now hear!
Already for a week long we have been contending for Hector,
Hermes was to abduct the corpse secretly,
But I will not diminish the honor of your son
And I hold to what I promised you.
But now go and report to your son,
Indignant are the gods, but I am wroth,
That in his rage he does not give Hector up!
He shall fear me and shall take ransom!
I myself now have it announced to Priam,
To go into the camp of the Greeks with gifts,
In order to buy back his son from Achilles.
But you shall now soften the mind of that one.
And the goddess, obedient to Zeus' commands,

Hastened down and in the tent she found Achilleus
Groaning and lamenting. Beside him she seated herself.
Child! she began, why do you swallow the sorrow
Into yourself and eat and drink and sleep not?

Better to seek rest in the arms of a loving,
Beautiful woman! For the time nears
When death and mighty fate call you.
Zeus says: you shall fear him, for he is wroth
And the immortals are wroth! Take from Priam
Ransom for the body of the dead Hector.
And he: Good! Whoever brings the money shall have him,
Since the Olympian himself so commands.
And at the ships mother and son exchanged
Further fleeting words thus with one another,
Iris however hastened down toward Ilios.
Away with you, Zeus commanded, tell Priam,
To the Greek ships he shall go,
Shall carry gifts with him for Achilles,
To buy his beloved Hector free.
But alone he shall go! Only an elder herald
May accompany him, who guides the mules
And who brings the dead man into the city with him.
He shall not be afraid, for Hermes will conduct him
As far as into the camp of Achilles,
And he will not kill him and will prevent the others.
For he knows what he does, and looks ahead
And takes care of the king and will spare him.
And in Priam's lament-filled house
The sons sat weeping around their father,
And he, the aged head strewn with dust,
Wallowed on the ground; but the daughters
Howled about the house, mindful of those
Whose lives the Greeks had all taken.
Standing beside Priam, Iris whispered
The message into his ear and he trembled:
Courage, and be not afraid! I bring good,
Comforting news! Zeus has sent me,
Who with mercy remembers you, o Priam!
You shall ransom, he commands, your son!
With gifts that you offer to Achilleus.

But alone you must go, no other Trojan
May accompany you, but an elder herald,
Who guides the wagon for you and curbs the mules
And brings the dead man into the city with you.

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You shall not be afraid: Hermes will conduct you
As far as the tent of Achilles in the camp,
And he will not kill you and will prevent the others,
For he knows what he does, and will spare you.
Therewith she went. But the king commanded
His sons to ready the mule-wagon
And to bind the seat-basket securely upon it,
But he himself descended to the high-built,
Cedar-paneled, fragrant chamber,
Where the precious things lay in abundance,
And called Hecuba to him: Zeus commands,
To the Greek ships I shall go
And with gifts soften Achilleus' heart.
What say you? I am powerfully driven
To go to the ships.
She however, sobbing:
To such an extent did your reason desert you,
Which was once so famous among all peoples?
You want to confront him who destroyed your cities
And slew your sons?
Iron is your heart, to undertake that.
If you stand before his eyes, him who eats flesh
Like the dogs, and who lacks loyalty and awe:
No shame will curb him! Let us both
Lament him here together far from Hector.
Ah, the mighty Fate spun for my poor
Child at birth already,
That the dogs should eat him far from his parents,
In the power of the man whose heart

I would like to tear with my own teeth,
Had I him! That he would have richly deserved
Of my son, for not as a coward
Did Achilles kill him: before all Trojans
And before the eyes of the women on the wall
He stood fearless and without thoughts of flight.
But Priam: hold me not back,
Speak not to me as a bird of ill omen,
For I do not believe you! Yea, had an earthly
Soothsayer or an inspector of sacrifices
Or a priest commanded me that I must go,
Liars altogether we would wish to call them
And keep ourselves cautiously at home.
Now however, since I myself heard and saw,
I go out and obey! And should I die

Out there, yet I go! Only once more will I
Hold my son in my arms,
And then let Achilles strike me too to the ground,
And the whole misery would have an end.

How Homer lets the characters grow in the course of the poem is rightly to be perceived in Priam. His wisdom, his mildness, the feeling of his dignity filling him have emerged: the sublimity of the ruler now shows itself. We did not know him thus before. There was a point for him at which it was no longer worth the trouble to be king. Until the last canto, Homer has saved up the moments in which the final intensification of the royal nature occurs. For Achilles' highest unfolding, the poet needed this contrast. Both now transfigure one another.

Priam has a peaceful, blessed reign behind him. A blissful patriarchate had already been entered upon by him when the disaster came over Ilios. The age of the king was indeterminate according to years—a high one, but not a powerless one—the warlike time, however, was long since over. Polydorus, his youngest, was still so young when he fell in battle that he

had been forbidden to take part in it. Nevertheless, Priam appears as the type of the primeval man and possesses his peculiarities. He trembles when Iris stands beside him, he wants to flee when an unknown person appears on the way to the ships, he starts when Achilles snaps at him, but yet he wanted, when Hector fell, to go out to the Greeks on the spot, and now lets himself not be held back from ransoming the corpse from Achilles. His spiritual strength is unbroken. His heart is of iron, says Hecuba.

Nestor's old age appears differently. The battle-times of his youth fall in far-distant days of which he alone still remembers. Other humans lived when he won his first victories. Nevertheless, he has remained in service. The difference between Greek and Ionian nature emerges again. The Greeks lead a military existence, the Ionians a civic one. Nestor is above all things a soldier, Priam a regent. Nestor leaves his land to join a foray; he has only his son with him.

He resembles the old Nordic kings who still travel across the sea to fight. It requires nothing special but occasionally abundant rest and a good drink. He sits in his tent and lets himself be told what is happening outside. Priam keeps himself in the palace. In the midst of his great family with wife and secondary wives, he forms the center of the city and of his wide dominion. Not his victories, but his acquisitions of land, his riches, his wisdom have made him the fable of the world. People tell of his happiness. It had penetrated as far as Greece. He reminds one of King Etzel of the *Nibelungenlied*.

He and his own do not stand in such close personal commerce with the gods as do the Greek princes. Nor does Priam possess that faith in the clergy which the Greeks have. For although Calchas and Chryses are treated poorly enough by Agamemnon, the evil consequences emerge immediately. Agamemnon rebels against the priests, whereas Priam maintains a skeptical attitude. He is enlightened. Soothsayers, interpreters of signs, and priests are to him inherently untrustworthy personalities. Perhaps this behavior of Priam could again be cited as something that establishes the historical position of Homer. Just as Voltaire stood at the beginning of the 18th

century and Goethe at its close, at the exits of periods of culture, Homer too could have done this. This has already been discussed.

How smoothly and without being interrupted by elaborate similes the narrative proceeds here. We have often seen that the interspersed images showed more vivid colors than the report itself which they interrupt: the twenty-fourth canto has nothing of this. We are to follow the principal acting persons step by step and never lose them from sight. Therefore, descriptions are at times so circumstantial here that bringing them into German is as good as impossible, since we are forced to render with general words the objects designated by specific names, the visual intuition of which we lack.

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How differently the king would stand before us, as he seeks out the precious items individually in his treasury which he intends to offer as the ransom for his son to Achilles, if we understood all the words exactly.

> And from the beautiful chests he lifted the lids,
> Chose a dozen wonderful garments,
> And of coverlets just as many and of carpets
> And twelve outer robes and twelve cloaks
> And of gold he weighed out ten talents,
> Two tripods he chooses, thereto four kettles,
> Also a magnificent beaker, a gift of honor,
> Which he once received in Thrace, something precious,
> Of this he deprived himself to ransom the son.
> But the Trojans, who stood below in the forecourt,
> He drove from the hall with angry words:
> Away with you, worthless idlers!
> Have you not grief enough at home, that you stand here
> Lamenting, because Zeus let me now lose
> My best son? You will notice it,
> That he is dead, for to the Greeks you are
> Easy booty now! But before I see the city
> Desolate and plundered before my eyes, I go

Myself into death beforehand. And with his staff
He drove the people away. They however withdrew,
As he approached, from the reach of the old man.
But now he snapped at his own sons.

Homer counts only nine here of the fifty that there were formerly. Paris mentioned among them in the second place. The others otherwise not appearing as players in the Iliad. Paris also appears here for the last time; only once more later will his name be mentioned. Hector had predicted to Achilles that Paris and Apollo would kill him.

Forward, wretched folk, who bring me shame!
Would that the Greeks had slaughtered you all
In place of the only Hector! Poor man,
I who had the best sons in Ilios,
And not a single one has remained alive to me!
Mestor and Troilus fell and now also Hector!

Hector, who walked like a god upon earth!
Who moved among us like the son of a god!
But he fell, and the remaining offscouring stayed with me.
Liars and dancers and highwaymen you!
Will you not on the spot ready the vehicle
For me and put everything in, that I may be gone!

And the sons fetch out the freshly built wagon, bind the seat-basket upon it, and attend to what belongs to the completion of the conveyance. Homer enumerates everything in order, as if he were addressing those particularly here among his listeners who occupy themselves with the business of driving. Once already he has described the harnessing of the golden chariot of Hera; here, however, he goes into detail quite differently. We learn all the parts of the wagon and even the origin of the mules that pull the freight wagon bearing the gifts. For the king, a second one harnessed with horses is brought forward.

There comes Hecuba. A wine-filled golden beaker in her hand, she places herself before the train. Against her wish Priam undertakes this path. For her sake he may first implore Zeus for a favorable sign and, should it fail to appear, abandon the journey.

Priam promises it to her. The stewardess of the house should fetch clear water, so that he may moisten his hands before the sacrifice. Homer, by assuming the stewardess to be present, awakens in us the vision of yet many other people who assemble around the wagon of the king. Again the stewardess appears, in the one hand the pitcher, in the other the basin, and Priam, wetting his hands, receives the beaker from those of the queen. Standing in the middle of the space, he lifts his eyes and offers the sacrifice.

> Zeus! All-father! Thou who from Mount Ida
> Lookest down ruling, Great one, Renowned one!
> Let me be well received by Achilles.
> Let me be worthy of his mercy.
> Send the dark bird, which of all
> Birds is the dearest to thee and the greatest,
> On the right hand, that I may see him with my eyes
> And in trust in thee travel to the Greeks.

Thus prayed the king, and Zeus sent, moved by pity, the eagle, which of all birds is the most perfect, the dark hunter, who is also called the “Black One.” As the door of a high-built hall is made, which a rich man inhabits, secured with strong bolts, so far apart to both sides went the wings. As he flew from the right over the city, all saw him, rejoiced, and their courage raised itself up. Quickly, however, the old man mounted the wagon and drove out from the resounding forecourt and the gate. Ahead the mules with the four-wheeled, laden vehicle, on which Idaeus was charioteer. The king followed with his own wagon, whose horses he drove on with the lash. Thus it went rapidly down through the city. The friends however ran along, lamenting, as if the king were going to his death. But when they came down from the city into the open field, then the children and sons-in-law went

back again. But the two, who drove alone across the plain, Zeus saw, and the old man instilled pity in him.

The structure of these scenes is to be taken into view. How Homer raises himself from the description of common commerce to the sublime representation of the prayer and then falls back into the naturally ordinary. How the places where he lingers descriptively and where he only alludes, alternate. How he places ever firmer intuitions before our sight, so that a specific locality visibly surrounds that which is occurring. Let it also be mentioned how the narrative in its family-like intimate treatment reminds us of that told at the beginning of the poem, that which plays in the house of Paris and Hector. Only rarely does Homer choose similar treatment to make things more visible in the Greek camp as well. Thus in the *Doloneia*. We shall see presently how the meeting in the tent of Achilles which now follows is again brought near to us with other means. How Homer passes from colorful painting that provides movement to a calmer outline-drawing reminiscent of sculpture. Once more I recall the *Nibelungenlied*, whose inflowing throng of words more merely contains the moving life than communicates it in firm sentences.

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Where a kind of blurring peal of bells does not condense into melodies impressing themselves upon us, but a feeling of that which is occurring penetrates into us directly from it. This Germanic, musical way of using language—whereby I designate by musical not the sounding of individual words, but the sounding-together of thoughts—we find in the *Edda* and in Ossian. In many German and Nordic songs we encounter it; in the *Nibelungen* it shows itself in the interspersed verses foretelling disaster. Occasionally in Goethe. In Jean Paul and Carlyle and Emerson. The *Waltharius* song has nothing of this. In the choruses of the Greek tragedies, it enters as a fixed artistic form. In Homer we encounter it rarely.

Let us notice how the departing Priam is shown to us again in a double form: once from Ilios, as those accompanying him look after him, and then from the bird’s-eye perspective, as Zeus sees him moving across the plain from Olympus. By sinking daylight, Zeus becomes aware of the king and of

Idaeus. He calls Hermes to him. “Hermes,” he says, “thou hast always had thy joy in commerce with men. Thou gladly givest ear to those whom thou wilt assist when they turn to thee. Come, conduct Priam to the ships of the Greeks in such a manner that none may see or recognize him until he has come to Achilles.” Hermes bound his beautiful soles underneath, the golden, ambrosial ones, which let him travel over earth and sea with the breath of the wind by day and night, and took the slender staff with which he lets the eyes of men, as pleases him, fall into sweet slumber or awakens the slumbering. With it in his hands the mighty slayer of Argus flew until he came to the land of Troas and the Hellespont. Then he went further, resembling a youth who strides along royally in the first bloom of his magnificent age.

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But those reached the great hill before Troy and stopped so that horses and mules might drink in the river. For already it was growing dark. The herald, however, noticed Hermes and said to Priam: “King, now we must be on our guard. I see a man who will slay us both. Either we flee with the horses or we embrace his knees and entreat for mercy.”

Thus said the herald. But courage failed the old man. Terrible fear filled him. Upright his hairs rose, with bowed limbs he stood as if stunned. Hermes however, stepping nearer, grasped the hand of the old man. “Why, father, dost thou drive thus with horses and mules through the night, when other mortals sleep? Fearest thou not the Greeks, the enemies who are near to us? If one of them saw thee driving through the night with such precious goods, how wouldst thou feel? Young thou art not thyself, and thy companion is too old to ward off him who might start a quarrel with thee. I myself will do thee no evil, but protect thee from others. For thou resemblest my dear father.”

To him the old Priam replied: “It is so, as thou sayest, dear child. But a god holds his hand shielding over me, that he lets me meet thee on my way. At a good hour thou comest, so handsome and sensible, a son of happy parents.”

“All rightly said,” answered Hermes. “Now give information: Dost thou perhaps carry precious property far away, so that this at least may be saved for thee? Or do you all already leave the city out of fear? For indeed the best man in Ilios fell, thy son, who was second to no Greek in the fight.”

“Who art thou?” answered Priam, “who are thy parents? That thou speakest to me so beautifully of the death of my son?”

“Thou wilt know who I am,” answered Hermes, “and askest after the divine Hector? Him I have seen with my eyes in the glory-bringing battle, when he drove the Greeks to the ships and struck them down.

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We however stood there marvelling, because Achilles forbade us to fight, he who was wroth with the son of Atreus. Achilles I serve, with whom I came hither by ship. A Myrmidon am I, and Polyctor is my father’s name. Wealthy he is and an old man like thee. Six sons are still at home, but I am the seventh. We all cast lots as to who should go along. Now I come from the ships hither into the plain. For tomorrow morning there will be fighting by the Greeks around the city. They want to fight, and the princes can no longer hold them back.”

“If thou art one of the servants of Achilles,” said Priam, “then reveal the whole truth to me: is my son still in the camp, or has Achilleus hacked him limb from limb and thrown him to the dogs?”

And Hermes: “The dogs and vultures have not mangled him, but beside Achilles’ ships he lies. Twelve days already he lies thus and uninjured is his skin, and the worms do not touch him, whose food are the men fallen in battle. Morning for morning, in the first early light of day, Achilles drags him around the grave of the beloved friend, yet the corpse remains unhurt. Wondering thou wouldst thyself perceive how he lies, dewy-fresh like a flower and no drop of blood visible on him, no evil spot, all wounds closed that had been struck him, for many have tried their lances on him. Thus the blessed gods take care for thy son even in death, who is dear to their heart.”

Thus spoke Hermes. And joyfully moved Priam replied: “Well-done it is, dear child, to bring to the gods obligatory gifts; as my son, alas, so long as

he was my son, never forgot the gods. Of this they still remember now, since he is dead. But thou, take this beautiful drinking vessel as my gift, be my protection and lead me with the help of the gods, that I may arrive in Achilles' tent."

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Hermes however said: "Thou puttest me as a young man to the test, whether I take gifts without Achilles' knowledge, but I do it not. For I fear and stand in awe of him and take nothing that belongs to him, lest it turn out to my disaster afterward. Thee however I would conduct over the sea or on foot as far as my home, and none should hostilely touch thee on the way."

And onto the wagon sprang the god and grasped the reins,
Took the lash in hand and whipped the steeds forward,
Breathing courage into the animals, and see, already the ships stood
Heaped up there in the darkness, and ditch and wall
Were reached, where the watch was cutting into the evening meal.
But Hermes checked the wagon, poured slumber
Over them and pushed back the bolt that closed the gate,
Opens it quickly and provided for the king and his gifts
Passage, until they reached the tent of Achilles in the camp,
Which for the prince the Myrmidons had erected
Of fir trunks and spread reed for a roof over it.
But the court of poles rammed thickly into the ground
A gate enclosed, and that a fir beam as a bolt,
Which three men pushed back and three forward,
But Achilles pushed it alone to and fro.
Thither the god led the king with his gifts.
And springing down from the wagon to the ground he cried:
Old man! Me, Hermes! the father of the gods has sent,
To be a guide to thee, and now I leave thee again,
For from the eyes of Achilles I hide myself: gods may not
Grant assistance to mortal men too visibly!
But thou, entering now into the house of Achilles, embrace
Entreating the knees of the son of Peleus and speak of father and mother,

Of his child speak to him and stir up his innermost heart.
Therewith he went away, the god, to high Olympus.

How friendly is Hermes' appearance here. We had taken leave of the Olympian company. Quarreling filled their being together, as from the beginning. An unworthy business. But for the very last time Homer lets Zeus and one of his sons intervene helpfully in human fate and gives back to the whole family its majesty and dignity. We judge them more mildly. If humans are burdened with their eternal sorrow, the gods are so with their eternal lack of care.

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They belong to humanity once and for all, and if they wish to enjoy true love, human women and men must grant it to the gods and goddesses. We feel how well Hermes feels in the mission he just had to fulfill. From the drink-offering of Priam before the departure, until the last reappearance of Hermes, who now also successfully helps the king back out of the Greek camp, the father of men and his loving son show themselves in full greatness and grace and indispensability. Only among themselves—this has already been discussed—do the gods have that wild passionateness that repels us and makes them almost ridiculous: in commerce with mortals their nature changes immediately. Hermes had until then hardly stepped forward. In the great battle of the gods he refused to fight with Leto. He is the condescending, kind one. He appears to men not merely for momentary infatuation, he converses with them. The way he wins Priam's trust lets him appear in the noble amiability of a young man of high birth. One might almost wonder that he learned such fine, considerate manners on Olympus, where such a bad tone and such boorish behavior prevailed.

Let us remember how Homer, who does nothing without intention, already let Hermes appear at the beginning of our canto. One of the god's sons figures among the Myrmidonian leaders, that Eudorus whose mother Polymele was the daughter of Phylas. When Polymele danced in the chorus in honor of Artemis, the goddess with the golden spindle, Hermes had fallen in love with her. Secretly she came to him, in the upper chambers of the palace they saw each other, and Eudorus was the son of both, so swift in the

race and so brave in battle. Then, when Polymele had become the wife of Echekles, the son of the mighty Actor, Eudorus remained behind with his grandfather Phylas, who raised the grandson like his own son. All this we learned in comfortable discourse; of Eudorus' deeds before Troy, however, nothing. Hermes must have known that Eudorus had gone along with the Myrmidons to Troy, but it is not spoken of further now, where Hermes showed himself helpful to Priam in the camp of Achilles. One perceives well how Homer, in this little story, was not at all concerned with communicating facts, but only with producing effects at specific places where he had need of them.

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Hermes thus still receives his *Aristeia* in the twenty-fourth canto. In the Odyssey he unfolds an activity extending further. To a firm interpretation of the double nature of the gods, which Homer carries through, I have not come even now, at the conclusion. Homer's religious convictions had nothing to do with it. In the Iliad, this last intervention of Zeus in the last canto initiates the reconciling finale, which is the basic mood of the conclusion of the poem and distinguishes the last canto therein from the earlier ones and makes it artistically the most beautiful part of the Iliad. Remarkable in it is the description of the local surroundings. Often already have we heard of Ilios in earlier cantos. Houses, alleys, gate and wall and towers we had before us: but the poet had never given us a feeling of the whole, never brought the palace of Priam before our eyes in such a way that it seems to build itself up topographically. Also where he speaks of the city, the mentions are scattered over the whole poem. Occasionally we become acquainted with the walls, the streets, the gate, the house of Paris, that of Hector, and all sorts of things from the environs of the city. Always thus—let us well notice—that what preceded is never repeated, but from piece to piece our acquaintance with things is expanded. In the twenty-fourth canto these parts gain coherence. We first perceive quite visibly how the palace of the king occupies the height of the city and how it goes down from it and through the streets to the gate and to the plain. All that is known to us, but only at the last departure of the king are we now completely at home in Troy. We think to be among those who accompany the wagons and, making

a halt below at the gate, follow Priam with our eyes. The descriptions of the canto work quite freshly. Always until then have we been led from the Greek camp toward the city; now we travel the path from the city to the camp. The plain and the river appear new. We see the darkness spreading over the landscape.

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And so at the Greek camp. Already it is dark when the ships and the wall are reached by Priam and Idaeus. We perceive how they emerge in great masses. We see the watch. We travel in thought with them through the gate. And finally the tent of Achilles: the high, reed-covered house which the Myrmidons built for their lord. Never before has Achilles' dwelling been shown to us. Fully had the night set in when Hermes moves from its place the immense beam that forms the bolt of the courtyard gate. Again Homer here makes use of the artifice of letting us become conscious of Achilles' immense strength through a secondary matter. From the fact that Priam had reached him at all, Achilles immediately recognizes also that gods had guided the king, for how else would he have come through the bolted gate to him?

The gently descriptive tone which Homer strikes in the twenty-fourth canto led me just now to make the attempt to bring some of his verses into German hexameters. Had I wished to translate more in this manner, the diction would however have received a varnish of artificiality that would have impaired the simplicity that appeals to us precisely in the last cantos. A regret also may be repeated for the last time: here at the conclusion of the Iliad we feel most vividly the irretrievable loss which the ignorance of the intimate Ionian language, lasting probably for eternal times, brings with it. How poor and limited we feel again and again in the face of turns of phrase and words which, used rarely or only once by the poet, indicate to us the existence of the finest distinctions. In the word order alone it expresses itself at times in conversations. Who today understands the conversational tone of the Homeric men and gods? Surely Homer lets the gods speak differently than the Greeks, and these differently than the Trojans. There may also have played into it dialectical elements.

The difference of the ranks may have been marked there with the slightest differences in word and accent. And at the same time Homer must have formed his own language, from which that of common life stood out just as far as the language which Goethe uses in *Hermann and Dorothea* did from that which was the common speech in the small towns of Germany around 1800.

Priam then is left by Hermes. Only now does he too descend from the wagon; Idaeus he leaves with the steeds and mules outside and enters the house.

There in the hall sat the Zeus-beloved Achilleus. There he found him. Set apart from his companions he sat. Two only, Automedon and Alcimus, were with him and served him. Just now he had taken food and drink. Still the table stood before him. The great Priam was not seen at his entry. Close before Achilles he embraced his knees and grasped and kissed the terrible, man-slaying hands that had slain many sons for him. And just as the vengeance of fate follows close upon the heels of a man who has killed a man in his fatherland and, fleeing into a foreign land, enters the house of a rich man, and those who see him are astonished, so Achilles astonished when he saw the god-like Priam. All however astonished and looked at one another. And entreatingly Priam raised his voice:

“Remember thy father, Achilleus, who like me is an old man. Alas, him his neighbors perhaps now beset, and no son is there to ward off the shame from him. He however, when he hears that thou still livest, rejoices in his soul, because he still hopes to see the son who returns from Troy. Me however vain longing consumes. Many sons I had in wide Troy, and none of them remained to me. Fifty I had when the Greeks came. Most fell in battle. The only one however who shielded the city, him thou hast now killed: Hector. For his sake I come. Ransom I bring for him. Fear the gods, Achilles, and cherish mercy. Remember thy father! How much more am I to be pitied.

For I endure what never an earth-dwelling man endured, the hand of the man who murdered my son, I must draw to my mouth." [1]

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[1]) Stolberg translates:

> Ah, I suffer what never one of the earth-dwellers
> Suffered; I kiss the hands that destroyed my sons.

Voss:

> For I endure what else no mortal earth-dweller:
> Ah, to press to my lips the hand that killed my children.

It might be translated:

> For I endure what never a man on earth has endured:
> To draw to my mouth the hand that murdered my son.

Monti requires four verses:

> — — *io che soffro*
> *Disventura che mai altro mortale*
> *Non soffri, supplicante alla mia bocca*
> *La man premendo che i miei figli uccise.*

Let us compare with this:

> *ἔτλην δ', οἱ οὔ πώ τις ἐπιχθόνιος βροτὸς ἄλλος,*
> *ἀνδρὸς παιδοφόνοιο ποτὶ στόμα χεῖρ' ὀρέγεσθαι.*

so we say to ourselves that in these words lies something untranslatable. Stolberg, Voss, and Monti write written language, Homer spoken.

Let us admire the course of this manly speech. Priam speaks neither of Achilles' mother, as Hermes recommended to him, nor of the child. As a king, he feels that only his own fate could move Achilles. And so he concludes with the image of his humiliation. We are at first doubtful what success the king's speech might have; at its conclusion, we are so no longer.

> And longing for his father, Achilles began
> To weep aloud. Grasping the old man's hand
> He gently warded him off. Remembrance filled

The hearts of both; the king, thinking of Hector,
Lay in howling misery at Achilles' feet,
But Achilles wept for his father
And for Patroclus, and into the silence of the house
Sounded their sobbing. Then at last he sprang
Suddenly up, raising the old man by the hand,
And by the sight of the gray head and the cheeks
Moved anew, he began to speak with him:
And you, whose soul so much misfortune burdens,
Whence do you take the courage, so all alone

To seek him who has killed for thee so many
Excellent sons? Of iron must thy heart be!
But upon my chair seat thyself,
Let the pains that devastate our soul
Now rest. For lamenting brings in nothing.
For us miserable creatures the gods have
Spun the lot, to live on in anxieties.
Only the gods nothing anxieties or concerns.
Before Zeus' throne stand to the right and left
Two vessels, from which good and evil
Promiscuously he grasps and flings to men.
To many it falls to their lot promiscuously: but to that one
Evil alone and to the other good only.
He who receives only evil runs as a poor,
Shameful starveling through life,
Hateful to men and gods. To Peleus they had
Bestowed the most magnificent gifts. Before other
Men they gave him happiness and wealth,
Gave the Myrmidons to him to rule
And wedded to the mortal an immortal.
But also evil they gave to him: only one child
Was born to him, a son dying early away,
And instead of tending the father in his age,

I sit, far from the beloved fatherland,
Here before Troy, mourning for thee and thy children,
Of whose happiness the world told.

The last verses of Achilles' speech are worthy of those with which Priam had concluded his own. Achilles and Priam have come so far through inner torments that they, each regarding his misfortune historically without complaining, only describe it. Therein lies the only consolation of every extreme fate, that we, in the feeling of enduring only the natural, attempt to comprehend scientifically that which has been experienced. What a thought, to let so venerable an old man as Priam and so mighty a youthful one as Achilles philosophize with one another about the value of life, about happiness and misfortune. They meet in their judgment. Such a scene neither Shakespeare nor Goethe has composed. There I lie at the feet of him who has killed my sons and destroyed my empire!

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There I sit and, instead of being a consolation to my father, I exert myself over nothing, let my friend go to destruction, avenge him, and perish myself: that was the conclusion of all the superhuman happiness with which the gods showered my father. And now I grieve over that which he endures whose son murdered my Patroclus, and he kisses the hands that killed Hector and his brothers. He is primeval and I am young. What is life?

Homer, however, does not let that be the conclusion of his poem. We do not yet know Achilles entirely. Once more almost his natural wildness would have broken out and his understanding with Priam flown apart. Achilles' speech was just not given to the conclusion; he speaks further:

Lesbos and Phrygia and the Hellespont
Were the boundaries of thy wide empire,
Where thou ruledst in wealth with thy sons,
And then gods brought the great disaster,
And around the city began the eternal war.
Bear it. To mourn the immeasurable
Leads to nothing and brings thee the son not back.
And who knows, if he returned into life,

What new misfortune there awaited thee.
But Priam took the word and said:
Not upon the chair of honor will I sit,
If my son still lies there unburied.
Let me ransom him, see him with my eyes,
Take the gifts that I carry with me.
Abundantly we bring them: rejoice in them!
Happy return to thy fatherland
Be granted thee, but let me of life
And of the light of the sun beforehand also be glad.
But directing his looks upon him from the side
Achilles cried: Quiet, or thou provokest me!
Hector I ransom out of my own resolve.
For sent by Zeus came my mother,
Bearer of his command; and thou too,
I see through thee and what led thee hither,
Not without divine guidance comest thou to me,
For no mortal would have reached the camp.
None, and were he even ever so strong,
Would have deceived the guards and the gate's bolt
With a mighty hand pushed aside.

But stir not up my soul still more,
Lest I against thee thyself, Priam,
Thou who shouldst enjoy my protection,
Against the will of Zeus nonetheless lay hands.

Priam could not measure what a storm his words excited in Achilles. He did not know how insidiously Hector murdered Patroclus, nor how near Achilles' end stood, and that Achilles knew it.

Priam was afraid and was silent. But Achilles, springing up
As a lion raises himself, went with the two
Whom after Patroclus he valued most,
With Automedon and with Alcimus he drew

Outside from the wagon the animals, brought Idaeus
In with him and bade him sit down.
And from the wagon-basket the two took
The gifts of Priam. Of the garments
They laid one for the dead man immediately aside.
Bade the maids fetch Hector's corpse,
Wash and anoint it, but secretly before Priam,
Lest, when he beheld the dead son,
Rage overmastered him, and not Achilles,
Nonetheless striking the old man to the ground,
Zeus' commands wickedly transgressed.

We understand now why Achilleus asked the king with a dark look not to stir him up more. He was not sure of a fit of rage overcoming him. His companions knew that and took precautions. In sudden change of mood, however, Achilles now does more than we expect. For Hector's corpse he lays himself upon the coverlets laid ready for him, lifts him with the others onto the wagon, and then turns with lamenting words to Patroclus.

Not to be wroth he asks him, if the news should penetrate down into Hades that Hector had been delivered up by him against ransom to his dear father. Patroclus would receive his fitting share of the gifts.

Achilles, after he has treated Hector now almost like a brother, feels himself freed from a burden and converses with Priam as if the king were his father. Over the last hour of their being together Homer spreads friendly light. Both sit opposite one another. "Thy son is ransomed," begins Achilles. "At daybreak thou wilt see him.

We however want now to eat at night." Thereupon he told of Niobe, how she had seen the twelve sons and daughters sink dead from Apollo's and Artemis' arrows and on the tenth day buried them. Then however she had taken food to herself. Also they both wanted that now. To weep for Hector, time would be found at the return to Troy. For many tears he deserved. Now a ram is slaughtered, the meat cut up, put on spits and roasted, bread distributed from delicately woven baskets and eaten. And then—a

magnificent trait—they sit opposite one another and rejoice mutually at their sight. “The highest that man can experience is to be astonished,” says Goethe.

> But when they had satisfied themselves with food and drink,
> Then Priam contemplated Achilles astonishingly,
> What a man he was, for he resembled the gods.
> But Achilleus astonished at Priam,
> His kind look and the sound of his speech.
> But after they had enough admired one another,
> The old man said, first taking the word:
> Now prepare my bed, that we soon
> Both refresh ourselves with beguiling sleep,
> For I have not closed my eyes
> From the hour on when thou slewest Hector.
> Always I have sighed and in the dust I lay
> Endlessly wallowing and lamenting. But now I have
> Eaten and wine for the first time tasted.
> And Achilles commanded the companions and maids
> To spread purple fleeces outside in the forecourt,
> To lay cushions and coverlets and cloaks over them.
> And with burning torches in their hands
> They hastened away.

Achilles is transformed. He explains to Priam why he lets the bed be prepared for him outside: one of the Greek princes might perhaps still appear, become aware of the king, and speak of it to Agamemnon; the ransom of the corpse would then perhaps again become doubtful. And once more he holds Priam back. Openly he should tell him how much time they needed in Troy for the burial of Hector, so that he might keep himself and also the Greeks in the camp for that long.

“To me would be,” answers Priam, “if I may bury my son with thy will, the following most worthy of thanks.” Achilles knew how closely enclosed they were in the city. Far from the mountains one must fetch the wood. The

Trojans were afraid. Nine days they wished to mourn the dead in the palace, on the tenth inter him and hold the funeral feast. On the eleventh throw up the burial mound. On the twelfth then could be fought again, if it then must be so.

It could be striking that the thought did not occur to Priam now which Hector had: to give back Helen with her treasures and thus take from the war its goal. That however could not be proposed by the king now, because Achilles then would not have been able to fall in battle before Ilion, as had been predicted and as the plan of the Iliad required.

Achilles promises Priam his commands would be fulfilled. Until the twelfth day the battle would rest. He grasps Priam's right by the wrist to take from him the last fear.

> And in the hall outside both slept
> Completely calmed, Priam and Idaeus;
> But Achilles in the house's stillest corner, [1]
> And Briseis rested at his side.

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[1] *mychō*. Cf. Weimar Goethe-Edition 5, 1, 5.

Here for the last time Achilles is told of in the Iliad. The twelve days' rest which he granted Priam, the king had requested not only for himself and Hector, but for Achilleus himself at the same time. For to this one too the twelve silent days still came to his benefit. The rest of his life. Now he was free. Patroclus was buried, Hector delivered up, his soul unburdened of all thoughts. Nothing more stood before him than, dying, to go into death: the unavoidable. Twelve days however also still with Briseis.

In the first canto I have anticipated what was to be said about her, but repeat it.

The camp of the Greeks harbored no family life. The captured women were a kind of living possession: "women," as the farmer says "cattle." They were appraised according to their talents and passed on individually or

in groups. They were estimable material. Briseis is the only woman in the camp who (besides Chryseis) is mentioned by name. The art with which Homer has made Briseis into a personality is one of his most amiable achievements. With how little means he worked here. The few delicate lines in which he drew this figure I have gathered together. To the last verse however he lets us in uncertainty what Achilles felt for Briseis. For if Achilles again and again named her and the memory of her abduction woke his anger, that did not need to be referred to the fact that Briseis was dear to his heart. Again and again, however, her name resounded from his lips. Also, Briseis has nothing to do with the course of events. Nothing, or everything!

That passage remains where Homer lets the captured king's daughter, given back to Achilles, throw herself in passionate pain upon the mangled corpse of Patroclus, in whose death she laments the destruction of her dreams. When Agamemnon had decided to give back Briseis, he took a solemn oath that he had never touched her, but gave her back pure as he received her. Why does Homer say of her, when she reappears in the camp of Achilles, "like the golden Aphrodite?"

I repeat also those verses of the nineteenth canto once more:

> Briseis, beautiful as the golden Aphrodite,
> When she saw Patroclus lying on the ground,
> Dead and torn, fell loudly crying out
> Down upon him; with her hands the tender breast
> And the face mangling she called upon him,
> She who resembled the goddesses: Woe Patroclus,
> None was so dear to me as thou! Thou livedst
> When I had to leave the tents here,
> And now I find thee dead when I return!

> Thus falls blow upon blow! First I lost
> My spouse to whom father and mother gave me;
> Then three brothers, children of the same mother,
> Whom a single day of misfortune took from me.

But though Achilles might kill the man for me,
Though he might destroy the city in which he ruled:
I should not weep, thou hadst said,
For thou wouldst to the divine Achilles
Give me as spouse, lead me upon the ships
To Phthia where the wedding would be.
Alas, and in death thou seemest to me still to smile.
And the women, as she spoke thus weeping,
Lamented with her at the same time, calling Patroclus,
But each wept for her own misery.

Briseis now submerges again.

That Achilles thought no more of her after Patroclus' death is clear enough. The drive for revenge swallowed every other feeling in him. Also Thetis did not name Briseis when she sought with motherly counsel to make him calmer; Achilles however remembers her now. In that night she lay at his heart. How however would the reserved, silent Patroclus have come to comfort Briseis with such firm promises, had Achilles not told him what he intended with her in his home. Now she should be his queen for twelve days still.

In no creative work has Homer accomplished his work with so little means as in Briseis' fashioning. To all figures of the Iliad seems to be lacking what we designate with sentimentality: a certain dissolving of the egoism which the life of the day demands, a twilight that lays itself over things and makes the hard outlines of actual existence softer. Homer never softens the sharp light that surrounds his figures. Also with Briseis he does it not, as little as with Andromache. But the mere existence of the two women replaces what might otherwise be lacking to them. Do we ask at the full fragrance of a rose whether it knows anything of the enchanting breath itself which, pressed to our lips, it lets us inhale? Homer's women lead in this sense almost a flower-life. Their passion has something of the swaying to and fro of heavily laden, silent fruit trees.

I have encountered Briseis again in a quite modern poem. Her last farewell from the dying Achilles is depicted. Written in a different conception of Achilles' fates than those we learn from the Iliad, yet in the representation of this woman corresponding to the spirit of Homer. Achilles' experiences exist in such scope in the imagination of contemporary humanity that to restrict oneself, as I have done, merely to the consideration of what Homer's Iliad contains, would occur to no one. If we summarize the entire mass of the Achillean cycle of legends, however, Achilles' character loses its unity. The individual passes over into a blurred heroism. For Briseis, with so many women who now appear alongside him, there remains scarcely any room. Let us consider that Homer indeed lets Achilles speak of his son Neoptolemus, but only a single time, and that certainly by intention neither the name of his mother, nor how Achilles met with her, is told. These things were, according to the knowledge of the poet, to remain half-veiled. Perhaps this also was to let Briseis emerge more prominently, for it is astonishing with what delicate intimations Homer often operates and has in view things lying far back—or far ahead.

Now it is already known from Schiller that, according to later legends, Achilles sank down on the day when he was to be wedded to Priam's daughter Polyxena, whom Homer does not know at all, and how the wedding feast was interrupted by his death. In Gordon's poem, Achilles, wounded to death, is carried into the camp of the Myrmidons and his last words belong to Briseis, who had been forgotten by him for Polyxena. He tells Briseis that she had always been the dearest to him. In her arms he dies. Thus the figure of the Homeric Briseis has, after thousands of years, now become newly alive in the thoughts of humanity in the most distant part of the earth, and a talented young poet, the first of whom Australia boasts, has planted her there and brought her anew into bloom.

Homer has spread about Briseis a breath of imperishable beauty in order to protect her earthly immortality. Her fates have been completely rounded off by him in the Iliad. I think, in the case of Briseis, also of the conclusion of the novel *Les pêcheurs d'Islande*, where to a young couple who love each other and are finally wedded, only a few days of full happiness are

granted. After their course, the young man goes away by ship and never returns. And the whole life of his young wife now passes in her sitting on the shore looking into the wide sea into which he has vanished.

The last 125 verses of the Iliad describe the return of Priam, his arrival with the corpse in Troy, Hector's lamentation and interment.

Hermes' commission was not yet quite completed. All sleep, only the thought of how he might successfully bring the king out of the Greek camp again lets him not come to rest. Standing at Priam's bed, he makes him understand that, should Agamemnon learn of his presence, triple the ransom given for Hector would not suffice. Filled with fear, Priam wakes his companion Idaeus. Hermes himself harnesses mules and steeds and drives with the king through the camp; only when they come to the ford of the river does he return to Olympus. Just now the morning sun rises. No one would have noticed the king's return, were it not for Cassandra, resembling the golden Aphrodite, who had gone onto the height of the city and kept watch. When she recognized the wagon of her father and Hector's corpse on the other vehicle, she cried out, and soon her voice filled the whole city: "Up, you Trojans and women of Troy, see him coming! Hector! Have you ever rejoiced in him when he returned home from the battle, for that was a great delight for the city and the whole people!"

No man, no woman, who did not now go to meet Priam. Close before the gates they meet the king, Hector's wife and his mother as the first. Pressing themselves toward the wagon, they grasp the corpse by the head. Loudly weeping, the people surround them in the throng.

And until evening that would have lasted, had the king not commanded passage for his team from atop the wagon. Home he wished to bring Hector, then they might satisfy themselves of their misery.

Into the palace he now enters, and Hector is laid upon his last bed. Around him place themselves the singers, the awakeners of tears. Andromache first addresses the dead man. What she and Hecuba and Helen say has been given by me already, looking ahead, in the first part. A

peaceful conclusion to the twenty-fourth canto. The Iliad breaks off. Everything is said. Also that which still lies in the future.

Achilles' death and the fates of the other most distinguished leaders of the Greek army are told in the Odyssey as lying far back. It is in the spirit of Homer to present that which lies in the future here as long past there. If we imagined Achilles' fall and lamentation from the Odyssey as composed as a continuation of the Iliad into a twenty-fifth canto, for instance, the difference in tone would make itself noticeable. Already the presence of this piece in the stock of the Odyssey, which I hold for Homer's work, tells me that it should find no place in the Iliad and that the twenty-fourth canto concluded the Iliad.

The breaking off of the twenty-fourth canto as the actual conclusion of the Iliad lets it be recognized how Homer composes from personal impulse. Let us remember how Goethe lets the tragedy break off as soon as the painful inner transformation in Tasso, Leonora, and Antonio had completed itself. Goethe always read Homer. Goethe had wished to continue composing the Iliad in his *Achilleis*. The single canto that he brought to completion has been held in very low esteem by some, and very high by others. I shall speak presently of this poetic work. While *Hermann and Dorothea* are so much filled with Homeric spirit that this poem places Goethe alongside Homer, his *Achilleis* appears to me to stand far from the Iliad in language and thought.

Farewell

To occupy our thoughts with the origin of great works of art lies in human nature. First we look about to see what information others or the artists themselves give concerning them. Then preliminary stages of the finished works are sought: studies that may have served for them, other works that have been imitated or somehow used, personal circumstances. Finally, we let our own aesthetic judgment speak the decisive word in the appraisal of a poem.

Three men I had placed as of equal value alongside Homer: one painter and two poets.

Concerning Raphael's first and last work of highest significance: the *Sposalizio* and the Dresden Madonna, we have no reports, nor preliminary studies for them. We judge only by the paintings standing there in the most beautiful preservation and know the judgment of others concerning them. Concerning the *School of Athens* we have, as far as its interpretation is concerned, two contradictory reports; otherwise as good as nothing, for the existing preliminary studies are without consequence, and the painting is so poorly preserved that aesthetic appraisal is not easy. For the *Disputa*, which is no better preserved, we possess on the other hand an abundance of preliminary studies explaining Raphael's development. Of still other works of Raphael, we know only that they were once in existence. Into one of these three categories fall all his other paintings, thus forming very unequal material for the history of his work. Upon what then do we base ourselves if we nevertheless judge them in general? Their sight fills us with the certain feeling of beauty and highest spiritual value, and there is thereby spread a certain light over them.

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To each individual work we accordingly assign its place, by explaining it from itself and from the rest. We discover ever more peculiarities of Raphael's artistic work, of his relationship to men and to nature. It pleases us to push these observations as far as possible. The possibility of falling into errors does not hold us back. We permit ourselves to express our opinion. Each will seek his own way there and arrive at his own results, which others might not wish to represent.

With Shakespeare, on the other hand, we are for the most part dependent upon the mere contemplation of the works, so that the history of his work rests upon personal judgment. Like Raphael, every century will regard him as its own and explain him afresh.

And so also with Goethe, although the circumstances here again lie differently. For Goethe's person and for each of his works, only insignificant things excepted, we possess such excessive material that the

consideration of his works seems to extend into the infinite. Yet Goethe stands no nearer to us for that than those three others, of whose existence we have no less the most vivid feeling.

And so we enjoy the works of all three men in almost equal certainty, and what seems to come to our aid more or less in the way of material is more worthless than we thought.

I believe a time will come when these auxiliary means for judging Goethe's works and also his character, which are already difficult to survey today, will lose much in value, and that one's own judgment of his works alone will provide the secure ground upon which we build the history of Goethe. So that the world will then concern itself as little with Goethe's common life-fates as with Homer, Raphael, and Shakespeare. With Homer, we start from the Iliad, alongside which the Odyssey, like silver beside gold, takes the second rank.

With Raphael, we start from the cartoons for the tapestries, alongside which some wall paintings and Madonnas maintain their rank, while almost all the rest appears as secondary work. With Shakespeare, from *Romeo and Juliet*, *Macbeth*, *Lear*, and *Hamlet*, which for youth and age tower above the other works. With Goethe, from *Faust*. At *Faust*, Goethe always worked in accidental moments, seemingly in passing: today one already thinks he must have felt it within himself as the shining principal matter in all moments throughout his life. *Faust* is for humanity today already the unaging, indispensable world-poem. After centuries and longer, one will be content with *Faust* in order to know Goethe.

Of every word therein we give account, a steadily increasing literature mediates its understanding, new translations make it more accessible to foreigners, new commentaries to ourselves. It seems desirable that to each new generation among us it should be said by the most competent what it contains. To *Faust*, Goethe's other works subordinate themselves; their value is measured by how far they reach it. A verse of *Faust* is for us more rich in content than all the letters we have from Goethe's hand. A time will come when *Faust* forms the center of Goethe's life-work, surrounded by

Goethe's other works, which are preliminary stages or stand upon equal or lower heights. And in a thousand years, *Faust* and Goethe are identical, and what is not *Faust* is forgotten, like Homer's *Margites*, which Aristotle still knew; Goethe then hovers solitary in the realm of history like Homer and Raphael and Shakespeare. Without a century surrounding him. Without reports concerning his person, which stick to him like fluttering tatters. And as with Shakespeare's and Homer's existence, so that of Goethe will perhaps one day be doubted.

The conjectures, then, which we have concerning the origin of the Iliad, we may believe or not: for the enjoyment of the Iliad they are indifferent. Previous conditions are assumed. The reports are uncertain. They show with certainty only the national importance of the poem from the oldest times onward.

We know that different redactions of the Iliad were there, which existed side by side. But what was the ground of their difference? Did the plan of the Iliad lie clearly before Homer's eyes when he began to compose? Did he add to it? Did he leave out? Did he change? Were there in ancient times, as with *Faust*, paralipomena of the Iliad? Did Homer work at the Iliad, as Goethe did at *Faust*, until his death? Were there, as with Raphael's tapestries, initial redactions which he later reworked? Did he use, as Goethe did with *Faust*, old folk-poetry? Or have parts of the Iliad become detached as folk-poetry? Did Homer at first write more in dialect than later? Manzoni brought his *Promessi sposi*, when he was old, into quite different, more dialect-free Italian: did Homer also do that? Or did others do it? Still during his life or after his death? Were there, as with the *Nibelungen*, redactions that contradicted one another? Simrock has formed from all old redactions of the *Nibelungen* his single New High German translation: did something similar once happen with the Iliad? Goethe's *Iphigenie* we have in various prose versions, until he himself wrote one in verse; Schiller's *Don Carlos* we possess in various versions from Schiller's own hand. Marquis Posa and Don Carlos were at first a single person in the tragedy. What criticism would give answer to such questions? Such things must stand before our eyes in print or manuscript.

We have a right to enjoy the Iliad as we have it, as one has the right to get to know *Faust* in the copy that we buy as Goethe's *Faust*. No one either will let it be said to him that only he understands the New Testament who reads it in Greek; that Luther's translation does not grant enough. Or that Schlegel's translation does not suffice for *Hamlet*. Against Voss's Homer, objections can be made. The book, however, has become a part of German literature, and he who knows it possesses something beautiful and great and has the right to say he knows Homer when he has read it.

To write a book wherein I treated the Iliad only as Voss offers it, as a work of creative imagination, was my recurring wish since my youth.

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I wanted to set forth that Homer's two great poems in their German form as it lies before us today could be judged like a modern poetic work. Through Goethe first, whose life was accompanied by the reading of Homer, Shakespeare, and the Bible, I learned to measure the importance of the Iliad and Odyssey for German existence. Finally, of external impulses, Cornelius' compositions from the Trojan cycle of legends directed me to Homer. To set forth publicly that the Iliad and Odyssey were in themselves articulated works of art appeared to me impossible as long as I saw only the one path before me, to combat opposing opinions. Only then did I become more hopeful, when it dawned on me that one could express oneself without touching upon what has been said by others concerning the manner of the origin of the Iliad and Odyssey. [1] In this sense I have occupied myself for many years with Homer.

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[1] I do not express all the reasons here which moved me to this. I say only that under "Philological Method" various things are understood today by various philologists.

Now I stand as if at the conclusion of a voyage of discovery, in which every progress into the almost unknown offered new surprises. Commerce with Homer is like that with nature herself, the contemplation of which incessantly brings forth new problems and at the same time, whether one now errs or finds the right, seems also to solve them. Homer's figures are

intelligible and enigmatic in one breath, just as life itself lets us encounter men. —

Two things have remained unsettled: the history of the pictorial representation of Homeric things and that of the relationship of significant men to the Iliad from Aristotle down to our time.

How important art acting in the manner of illustration is for the reception of poetic works can be observed in the case of the *Nibelungen*. Cornelius' drawings give false conceptions of the main persons, as full of life and grand as they are. He places a dying youth opposite an old villain, while according to the poem Siegfried and Hagen are to be thought of as men of approximately the same age.

The later representers of scenes of the *Nibelungenlied* have been influenced by Cornelius. Where Siegfried takes leave of Chrimhild, on Cornelius' representation two quite young siblings seem to part from one another. Still younger appears Chrimhild when Hagen sounds her out as to where Siegfried is vulnerable, and still older here Hagen. To create the image of a Siegfried would today perhaps be impossible, because the Siegfried of the opera dominates the contemporary imagination. Here his figure has been pushed back into the mythical.

How stands our art toward Achilles?

One of the most beautiful statues of the Alexandrian period is the standing, helmeted, naked Achilles, a combination of youthful strength and youthful lightness. An unshakable standing-there. Resistance. Attack. Beauty. Health. All to be surveyed in a single glance. The body as a magnificent garment of the soul. No other image of Achilles surpasses this statue.

The Renaissance has scarcely touched the Trojan cycle of legends. On the woven tapestries in the palace at Urbino were found the deeds of the heroes of Troy, but upon Raphael that had no influence. Yet I have pointed out how much Raphael in the *Farnesina* lets the gods appear in the spirit of Homer. His Mercury flying down from heaven, who brings a message of

Jupiter to men, belongs in Apuleius' Psyche-tale: the figure of the god, however, and his sinking down from the height would form a peerless illustration of the Hermes sent down from Zeus to Priam. A striking imitation of Homer is the "Life of Mary" by Sannazaro, whose Latin hexameters fashion the Christian heaven similar to Olympus, and God the Father similar to Zeus. One recognizes in the attempts of Raphael and Michelangelo to fashion God the Father not an imitation of Greek ideals, but the unconsciously intervening rule of Homeric imaginative work. This now I do not pursue further here, as it would be aimless labor. Through opera and tragedy, many Homeric figures became popular in the 18th century.

The mixture of heroism and veneration of ladies, which filled the French and Italian stage at that time, became decisive for the illustration of the Iliad and Odyssey. In the Viennese reprint of the Vossian translation the copperplates are still maintained thus: the architecture offers theater decorations, the movements of the figures correspond to the affectedness in which grace was sought at that time. Rubens, in his mighty expansions of shining nakedness, rustling garments, and gold and silver, while sea and land and clouds, ships, palaces and flying teams are promiscuously the comfortable fatherland of these blooming, elemental figures, has best shown how one saw Homer's scenes before one in the 17th and 18th centuries. Then came with the French Revolution the new classical art, which in the sober imitation of ancient sculpture perceived the source also of pictorial intuition. At that time Flaxman, in the spirit of Greek vase painting, invented his outlines for Homer, which today are still more powerful than is known. The abundance of Homeric representations which David and his French and German pupils brought forth have vanished from the memory of today's public. Upon Cornelius' Homeric paintings in the Glyptothek, David was still an influence. Cornelius sought to bring warm blood back into the veins of the Homeric heroic bodies, but found more admiration than understanding and founded no school that dominated the public. His Achilles, who without weapons by a terrible crying out brings

the battle of annihilation around the ships to a standstill, is one of his mightiest figures. The cartoon is in Berlin.

Homer's effect in the first half of the 19th century was a literary one through Voss. Voss's Odyssey and Iliad worked like national poems. But when learned textual criticism then began its work, one turned away from Homer with a certain shyness. He would be still more forgotten, had not Schliemann's discoveries newly turned public interest toward him. Striking are the attempts of some most modern French painters, Rochegrosse for instance, to present the battles around Ilion with the external apparatus of the ornaments excavated today in Troy and Mycenae in an Indian-like hideous manner.

To describe the influence of Homer upon more recent poetry would be a vivid task. Shakespeare's strange drama *Troilus and Cressida* gives a caricature of Achilles. His ridiculous pride corresponds in many respects, despite everything, to the Iliad. Achilles, however, is not the main person; rather, the piece is constructed from the Trojan side, and development lacks all dramatic interest; on the other hand, in its dialogues it is so entirely filled with witty antitheses that, judged from this side alone, it must be reckoned among Shakespeare's most brilliant works. I ask you to read Hector's farewell from Andromache, with what theatrical art this scene is built up.

The most living re-awakening of Achilles was begun by Goethe. The *Achilleis* arose while he was composing *Hermann and Dorothea*. It remained almost unknown until more recent literary history pointed it out. Goethe completed only the first canto, in which it is described how Achilles has the burial mound completed which is to receive his ashes united with those of Patroclus. It contains no other action than the continuation of the heaping up of the earth. Of the Greeks, only Achilles and Antilochus and the host of working Myrmidons appear. A part of the canto is transposed to Olympus. The language relates to that of Homer as the verses of Goethe's *Iphigenie* relate to those of Euripides, perhaps. No imitation of Voss. The landscape is delicately executed in light and shadow and coloring.

Let us hear the opening verses:

High into flames kindled the mighty blaze once more,
Striving against the heaven, and Ilios' walls appeared
Red, through the dark night;
the heaped-up woodland's
Immense framework, collapsing, excited
Mighty heat at last. There sank Hector's bones
Down, and as ash lay the noblest Trojan on the ground.
Now Achilles raised himself from the seat before his tent,
Where he watched through the hours, the nightly ones, beheld the flames'
Distant terrible play and the changing fire's movement,

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Without turning his eyes from Pergamos' reddish fortress.
Deep in his heart he felt the hate still toward the dead man,
Who slew his friend and who now sank away entombed.
But as now the rage subsided of the devouring fire
By degrees, and at once with rosy fingers the goddess
Adorned land and sea, so that the flames' terrors paled,
Turned, deeply moved and gentle, the great son of Peleus
Toward Antilochus and spoke the weighty words:
So will come the day, when soon from Ilios' ruins
Smoke and vapor arises, by Thracian breezes driven,
Ida's long mountain range and Gargarus' height obscured;
But I shall not see it! The waker of peoples, Eos,
Found me gathering Patroclus' bone together, she finds
Hector's brothers just now in the same pious business,
And thee she may also soon, my dear Antilochus, find,
That thou the light remnant of the friend lamenting entombest.

What a sequence of colorful, light and shadow-filled pictures, all outshone by the breaking sun. Such effects are not found in Homer. Nothing either in the New Testament, while Klopstock's *Messias* is filled therewith and in Milton the description of nature almost outdoes the personal. In the *Achilleis*, the main labor of the poet falls to the conversations of the gods, mostly that of Athene with Achilles. Goethe does not imitate Homer and

does not attempt to transpose us into the mood of the Iliad. There lies no spreading of antiquarian erudition in the poem. Rather, just as Klopstock in his *Messias* transposes the appearing personalities according to their way of thinking and language into his own century, and as Goethe does this in his *Iphigenie*, so he makes the gods and men of his *Achilleis* inhabitants of the eighteenth century drawing to its end. An atmosphere of German humane peacefulness rests over the paintings of the *Achilleis* as over those in *Hermann and Dorothea*.

Goethe continued the Iliad as a modern German. We saw how in the twenty-fourth canto of the Iliad Achilles' nature is transformed. How in view of his imminent destruction the philosophical calm lying within him completely gains the upper hand. Already in the earlier cantos of the Iliad the need for stillness emerged in him.

The withdrawal from the battle, to which he condemned himself, weighed less upon him than upon his Myrmidons, but was, one could almost say, not unwillingly borne by him. Not in banquets does he wish to forget the time, but solitary, and even toward Patroclus silent, he is occupied only with himself. It is as if he shied away from the battle because the frenzy of mad cruelty, into which he is drawn there, insults himself. His rage then knows no bounds, and he is afraid of himself. In Priam he had encountered the first man whose thoughts fill him with reverence. Achilles reconciles himself with his fate.

In the form which Achilles now assumes, Goethe wished to make him the bearer of new spiritual developments and also fates. The soldier awaiting the final battles in Homer walks in Goethe, now only possessed by contemplative dreams, over the earthly soil, and the poet strides beside him and counts his steps. Goethe could not do otherwise than to mix into Achilles' nature that portion of sentimentality without which his further development in the sense of the 18th century was impossible. If we thought Homer had risen again in Goethe's times in Germany to write the *Achilleis*, he would have written it, now as a German Greek, as Goethe began. Goethe wished to deliver no antiquarian piece of artistry.

The Olympians of Goethe also have a share in this transformation. A certain gently sublime humanity has been bestowed upon them by the German poet. Homer let this humanity finally become master over the immortals in the Iliad itself. Zeus' and Hermes' last intervention in the twenty-fourth canto sounds as if a moral revolution had taken place on Olympus also. The gods and goddesses known to us carry on conversations in Goethe as if they belonged to the international educated highest nobility of the 18th century, which stood under the influence of Rousseau. Athene confided to her more maternal friend than mother, Hera, that she would, were it possible for her to love a man, have given herself passionately to Achilles.

That sprang from sentiments such as Leonora d'Este cherished for Tasso. Whether Homer wished to depict in his Olympians the very highest stratum of the human society of his time, we do not know; that Goethe in the *Achilleis*, however, felt them so, is not doubtful.

There lie in the Goethe-Schiller Archive both drafts of Goethe for the *Achilleis*. The first of March 31, 1798, for all cantos, the second of March 9, 10, and 11, '99, for individual cantos. They afford more the scenarios, less the interior of the events, so that I was not able to recognize the reason why Achilles finally sinks away. If we compare the course of the first canto, however, which Goethe executed, with the initial scenario for it, strong deviations result. Goethe, carried away by his poetic power, departs from the path he initially prescribed for himself. It is to be concluded from this that Goethe in the following cantos would just as little have turned to the scenario. It would therefore be futile labor to wish to recognize from the existing records the presumptive form of the whole poem.

From Goethe's letters to Schiller we see how the thought of writing the *Achilleis* sprang into his soul, became ever mightier in him, culminated in the production of a plan for the whole poem and in the writing down of our first canto. Goethe gives here disclosures about himself of the highest importance. He compares experiences in what he had experienced in his own poetry with Homer's manner in the Iliad and Odyssey. In the letter of

April 19, 1797, he writes: “Some verses in Homer, which are given out as entirely false and quite new, are of the kind such as I myself have inserted some into my poem (*Hermann and Dorothea*) after it was finished, in order to make the whole clearer and more intelligible and to prepare future events in time. I am very curious what I shall be inclined to increase or diminish in my poem when I am through with my present studies; meanwhile the first recension may go out into the world.” We take a look into Goethe’s workshop. We perceive wherein the furthering of Schiller’s spiritual collaboration lay for him.

On May 16, 1798, he writes further to Schiller: “The Iliad appears to me so round and finished, one may say what one will, that nothing can be added thereto nor taken therefrom. The new poem that one undertook, one would likewise have to seek to isolate, even if, according to time, it attached itself immediately to the Iliad.

The *Achilleis* is a tragic subject, which however because of a certain breadth does not disdain an epic treatment.

“It is thoroughly sentimental and would qualify in this double capacity for a modern work, and a quite realistic treatment would set those two inner qualities into equilibrium. Furthermore, the subject contains a merely personal and private interest, whereas the Iliad encompasses the interest of the peoples, the parts of the world, the earth and the heaven.

“All this be laid to your heart! If you believe that, according to these qualities, a poem of great extent and much labor is to be undertaken; then I can begin every hour, for concerning the ‘how’ of the execution I am mostly at one with myself, but shall, according to my old way, make a secret of it until I can read the executed passages themselves.”

To us today, unfortunately, no pieces of ancient poetry have explanatory thoughts of their authors themselves at our command, such as Herder’s, Goethe’s, and Schiller’s letters or other confessions provide for their works. Of these aids classical philology must be destitute. And yet! What a slight light precisely in Goethe’s *Achilleis* this intimate knowledge grants to

illuminate the poem in its deepest depths! Our own feeling of what Homer and Goethe reveal in their verses is that upon which it mostly depends. And so: Homer's Iliad would not stand nearer to us if we possessed letters of Homer about it like those of Goethe about his *Achilleis*. Only one thing today keeps the Iliad further from us: that its language in its finest accents is despite all foreign to our feeling, as every language is to everyone that is not his mother tongue.

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On the other hand, what concerns Goethe himself, his letters to Schiller about the *Achilleis* contain magnificent confessions. A number of letters may find their place here.

Goethe to Schiller.

(March 9, 1799.)

"A great part of the poem, which still lacked inner form, has organized itself down into its smallest branches, and because only the infinitely finite can interest me, I imagine to myself that I can be finished with the whole, if I turn all my powers upon it, by the end of September."

(March 16, 1799.)

"Of the *Achilleis* already five cantos are motivated and of the first 180 hexameters written."

Goethe to Knebel.

(March 22, 1799.)

"The *Achilleis* is an old idea that I carry about with me and which has received new life and interest particularly through the recent disputes over the age of the Homeric poems and over the rhapsodic compilation of the same. I begin with the conclusion of the Iliad, the death of Achilles is my next subject, meanwhile I shall probably reach somewhat further."

Goethe to Schiller.

(March 26, 1799.)

“This morning I arrived at the speech of Minerva, and because this actually opens the following section, I am inclined to present my previous work to you today.”

Goethe to J. H. Meyer.

(March 27, 1799.)

“The *Achilleis* moves forward, I have already 350 verses, which are now to draw the others after them.”

Goethe to J. H. Meyer.

(April 1, 1799.)

“This week I still want to live out here (Jena) in full industry, probably the first canto will be finished and, if it is possible for me, I shall immediately begin the second, so that no standstill occurs; for the work already begins to show an immense breadth, for which, without sustained industry, life would probably not suffice.”

Goethe to Schiller.

(April 2, 1799.)

“I send here the first canto, as I wish to make a small pause in order to assure myself more specially of the motives that are now next to be worked upon. — I have the best courage for this work.” — —

From then on, the *Achilleis* vanishes from the realm of his creative power. In the first canto everything had been said. Goethe had felt that between the Iliad and Odyssey, as two units, a third epic must still lie between: this he wished to compose out of his own time. Beside Homer he

placed himself as a second, taking possession of that which Homer left lying untouched. Goethe felt himself a world-poet beside other world-poets and assigned without hesitation this high position to himself.

Goethe, however, did not stand here, as in *Götz*, over against a people whose life he ennobled in his poetry: his imagination reproduced something foreign. One understands that the *Achilleis* was left lying. Thus Schiller, too, was filled with figures of the Homeric cycle of legends. His "Farewell of Hector from Andromache" models the Homeric scene anew out of his own plenitude of power. Through Schiller mostly has Cassandra become popular. He conceives Greeks and Trojans and the Olympians in a humane-sentimental way like Goethe.

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I write this farewell to my work in Bozen, where I was often occupied with it. I have always come into the land here only in spring, and according to my imagination the home of spring is here. Toward the east and west we Germans collide with hostile peoples; toward the south Italy and Germany flow peacefully into one another, German nature and Italian mix at this latitude. The German, however, predominates; further south only does the Italian type become mightier.

Therefore, the statue of the German poet whose home is transposed hither also belonged to Bozen. Though it may be only good faith that Walther was born here: we owe to him the magnificent work of Natter, the sculptor who died early. Where I have otherwise seen statues of German poets in Germany, they did not always fit completely into their surroundings: their figures have at times something of exiles who had their actual home in sunnier regions. With Natter's Walther von der Vogelweide on the Johannisplatz in Bozen, such thoughts will come to no one. He stands there as if he wished to confirm for all future time the belief of dear Ignaz Zingerle that he takes his place here as a Tyrolean with good right. In Bozen, as the German border district toward Italy, Goethe too could still receive a statue of the beautiful German marble that is quarried in Schlanders. Perhaps later times will erect it.

Yesterday evening, when it was about to become night, I went across the square and saw Walther standing there once more, in the gently resting position which for a statue is the only correct one. The inner luminosity of the marble let the figure still appear bright, and the dark rain clouds over the mountains round about reinforced this light. I had a vivid feeling that a self-reliant personality stood there. The sculptor has bestowed it upon him: this Walther remains Natter's work; but like every true work of art, this one too has freed itself from its master and exists for itself. That is the triumph of an artist (or of a work of art alone, if we do not know him who produced it).

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I compared in thought other statues with Natter's work and had to tell myself how shadow-like many among them appear. All the praise of the public goaded to admiration does not carry into the work the spark of life which the artist did not give to it. Where this spark from a work, however, leaps out at us, there all demonstrations do not rob the work of its value. Calculation of moderately gifted men produces nothing living.

Not only other statues, however, but also painted portraits and, finally, personalities created by poets and historians I drew into comparison as to their real existence, and many collapsed as if built up of ash. To all, if they are statues, it is common that they do not stand calmly, but as if frozen in an accidental movement. With glaring lights and shadows upon them. Not one of the persons who populate the Iliad has anything of this transitory essence about them; also the figures of the *Nibelungen* are free therefrom. Inner life-force is so much inherent in Homer's persons that, could one observe them with a spiritual microscope, the finest psychological stirrings would come to light. To establish this viability I have attempted. If others, however, perhaps take up my work one day, they will arrive much further than I. For that I could still have directed attention to much that I overlooked or wished to overlook, I know. I would also have worked more slowly, had the feeling not spurred me on that it must first be brought to a conclusion. That I would always have come to the same result in all observations, however, is indubitable to me. Occasional errors, therefore, into which I might have fallen, change nothing in the correctness of my total presentation. Either the Iliad is a created work of art, or it is not. It is one.

Should someone be found, then, who gained this conviction like me and, proceeding from it, wished to work through the Iliad anew, he would certainly also arrive at a more firmly substantiated view concerning the person of Homer than I.

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For this, far-reaching investigations of the way of writing would be required, which not only the great poets have, but also those who in the second line still stand high enough. Also the style of the historians would come into consideration. Tacitus is here the most significant for the ancient time, Voltaire for the 18th, Treitschke for the 19th century; if we consider the art with which these three writers have appropriated material appearing unsurveyable, brought it into masses and not only stratified these through a simple but great architecture, but also enlivened them with the finest detail work, we are astonished and rejoice in their joyful labor. (For without joy in the matter all scientific work is fruitless, and the inner joylessness in which some things are carried on today with great means has something frightening.) With the poets, the investigation of the use of words and the sentence structure must be conducted still more carefully. In them we see still more clearly how versions of thoughts and the seeking of the point from which things and men are viewed by them emerge. How thoroughly differently they describe that which simply occurs! A certain manner is peculiar to each of them, to work with antitheses, to use the colors and to produce their own effects through the change of light and dark. A peculiar manner, in narratives, to push things into the present, past, or future and herein to change again, we observe. The higher poets and writers stand, the more they have regard for the use of these means to perfect their style, while some do not know their value and smilingly deny it. Here lies the individual in the way of writing of significant men. The more sharply we observe, the more we discover, while the lifeless, empty then only spreads itself in ever more desolate surfaces. In the indication of this inner richness of the great writers lies also the power of true instruction.

The question of the visibly earthly experiences of Homer I cannot answer. Legendary matter has been handed down with which antiquity let itself suffice and which we also gladly accept.

Homer’s poverty and blindness are not to be proven; why however reject a tale which, beautiful in itself, is yet indifferent for the literary activity of the poet? Of significance would Homer’s blindness only be if we knew whether he was always blind or only became blind in old age. In his poem nothing indicates that he was deprived of eyesight. Were it however vouched for that he lost it later like Milton, then perhaps the uncommonly sharply outlined drawing and the glare of some light effects, which also emerge in the adjectives, would be traceable thereto. In Milton, this struck me. It is as if in Milton’s imagination the earthly appearances had received this sharp-cut quality in outline, this glowing quality (as the twilight often transposes things into a peculiarly penetrating light), and it could also in Homer have occurred this doubling of the inner intuition. So little, however, did one know in antiquity of Homer that, as the world-known verses say, seven cities contended for it, to be his birthplace. Whence did he stem? The Iliad does not even betray on which side of the contending peoples he stood. He is as universal as Shakespeare, whom we do not merely hold for a Protestant and Catholic, but also, if we only had *Romeo and Juliet*, *Othello*, and *The Merchant of Venice*, would take for an Italian. And who, if we did not know it exactly, would believe Shakespeare was an actor and Goethe at first an advocate in a medium-sized commercial city, and then, transposed into a then tiny residence, until into his high age the first much-harassed administrative official of a smaller state? Who of Raphael, that he had his compositions corrected by the grand, but also foolish Leo X.? Documents concerning Homer’s life are lacking.

We have a head representing Homer which may have arisen in the times of Alexander, and the best specimen of which has been recognized and edited by Heinrich von Brunn. More beautiful and more full of character and more convincing the blind singer in whom antiquity believed could not be represented. No one who has seen the work will forget it again and no one for that reason turn away from it because the portrait likeness cannot be vouched for.